Article

Intimate Belonging—Intimate Becoming: How Police Officers and Migrant Gang Defectors Seek to (Re)shape Ties of Belonging in Denmark

Mette-Louise E. Johansen

The Danish Center for Social Science Research-VIVE, 1052 Copenhagen, Denmark; mlej@vive.dk

Abstract: This article examines the ways that Danish gang exit programs engage police officers and gang defectors in a pervasive work on belonging between gangs, kinship networks and the state. In urban Denmark, the majority of gang exit candidates are of ethnic-minority background and form part of the street-gang environment in marginalized migrant neighborhoods. This is an intimate social environment constituted by diasporic kinship networks, where gang formations are entangled with kinship formations. Hence, when gang defectors leave their gang, they also often leave their family and childhood home for a life in unfamiliar places and positions. As I show, gang desistance is thus a highly dilemmatic process in which gang defectors find themselves "unhinged" from meaningful social and kinship relationships and in search of new ways of embedding themselves into a social world. Based on an ethnographic study of gang exit processes in Denmark's second largest city, Aarhus, this article shows how police officers and gang defectors seek to (re)shape ties of belonging between gangs, kinship networks and the state. The process, I argue, illuminates the intimate aspect of the notion of belonging, in which kin and state relatedness is deeply rooted in interpersonal spaces and relationships.

Keywords: migrant families; hinging; gang desistance; policing; welfare state; Denmark

1. Introduction

"I have several aunts who live in my old neighborhood but they never care to ask how I am doing. Seriously, I was driving around the housing estate protecting everyone. I was 'patrolling' and it was for them. But they never ask me how I am, not until this day, so fuck it, I never visit them. Ole [social worker] and Stefan [police officer], they were there for me when nobody else cared. Their actions showed me that they cared". AK, 2020

The first time I met AK—the former president of a local street gang—was in the summer of 2020. We met at a parking lot in front of his father's car repair shop on the outskirts of Denmark's second largest city, Aarhus, a place that became the venue for our interviews over the next couple of months. AK considered himself a "family guy". In fact, while engaged in excessively violent gang wars in the neighborhood where he grew up, he had envisioned his warfare as family protection. Revisiting these conflicts during our conversations, he was pondering how the family had failed. AK was about to finalize three years' participation in a gang exit program run by municipal social workers and the local police and had agreed to tell me about his experiences with the police. However, most of our conversations were about leaving meaningful relationships, whether to gangs, girlfriends or kin relatives, while not knowing how to replace them. AK was 29 years old and the son of a refugee family of Palestinian descent, who came to Denmark in the 1980s after fleeing the Lebanese civil war. Like more than ten thousand other residents of migrant background, he lived in one of the largest politically defined "hard ghettos" (*hård ghetto*) located on the outskirts of Aarhus (Bach 2019a, p. 3). The neighborhood was the home of his entire extended family at his own and his parents' generational levels, and he grew up

playing with his cousins and children from the block, whose extended families were also a part of the community. In his youth, his immediate social surroundings included people who were gang members, mothers of gang members, or related to gang members in some way or another. As he had become part of an entangled gang and kinship network, his gang desistance eventually turned into a complex maneuvering in and out of social relationships.

This article explores the lived experiences of belonging among migrant gang defectors such as AK and his friends, to whom belonging has become an achievement in itself. Based on five months of ethnographic fieldwork in the gang exit program in Aarhus, the article investigates how the police officers in the gang exit program and gang defectors become engaged in a project that focuses on belonging. With a point of departure in selected cases, I flesh out the relational work involved in shaping ties of belonging between gangs, migrant families and the state. In urban Denmark, the majority of gang exit candidates are of ethnic minority background and form part of the street-gang environment in deprived migrant neighborhoods. This is an intimate social environment constituted by diasporic kinship networks, where gang formations entangle with kinship formations. Hence, when gang defectors leave their gang, they often also leave their family and childhood home. What remains is a life in unfamiliar places and positions in Danish majority society. As I briefly argue, gang desistance is thus a highly dilemmatic process in which gang defectors find themselves "unhinged" (Guenther 2013) from meaningful social and kinship relationships and in search of new ways of embedding themselves into a social world. In this situation, the police officers seek to become "significant others" placed in a position of trust, who can temporarily replace kin and social relations and function as "hinges" to a new and allegedly better form of life. This process, I argue, illuminates the inherently intimate aspect of gang exit programs, in which kin and state relatedness are deeply rooted in interpersonal spaces and relationships. While the staff in the gang exit program consists of both police officers and municipal social workers, I have chosen to focus on the role of the police in the gang desistance process. Both types of professionals hold a central role in the exit program and seek to establish personalized relationships of trust with the gang defectors. However, the main responsibility of the police is to secure the gang defectors' safety, and this task immerses them into the gang defector's life and social environment in very particular ways. The police officers are a key point of my analysis because they embody the power of the state and its monopoly on violence, which provides them with a unique embeddedness into the gang desistance process.

In order to make the above argument, I structure the article in three parts. The first part introduces the research methodology and outlines a conceptual framework for analyzing the notion of intimate belonging in the context of reformatory interventions, drawing particularly on the work of Guenther (2013) and her understanding of "hinged (inter)subjectivity" (Guenther 2013, p. xxi). Guenther argues that we are not simply atomistic individuals but rather hinged subjects who can become unhinged if we are denied concrete experience of others' embodied subjects. Guenther's emphasis on intersubjectivity as an existential condition of human survival provides me with an analytical prism to understand the constitutive role of embodied interpersonal relations in issues of belonging. In the second part of this article, I describe the field and how the national gang exit program in Denmark is run on the basis of personalized policing. In the final part of the article, I analyze the cases of AK, Amir and Mohammed as they become unhinged from their families, and as the police officers become hinges to a new social world. I conclude the analysis by discussing what this tells us about the intimate mechanisms of belonging among some migrant families in Denmark.

2. Research Methodology

This article is based on a longitudinal study of marginalized migrant families and of state police engaged in crime prevention in deprived migrant neighborhoods in Denmark. Since 2016, I have been particularly interested in researching reformatory interventions that target gang defectors from street gangs, motorcycle gangs (Johansen 2021) and radicalized

or extremist groups of citizens (Johansen 2018, 2020). These reformatory programs are interesting because they show the microdynamics of social engineering in the Danish welfare state and can be approached as paradigmatic cases (Flyvbjerg 2006) of how citizens are reformed through the minute regulation of their everyday life (see also Larsen in this volume).

This article draws particularly on five months of ethnographic fieldwork and interviews conducted in 2020 with gang defectors, police officers and municipal social workers in the gang exit program in Aarhus. Methodologically, the fieldwork was carried out as organizational ethnography (Rhodes 2011) and in situ ethnographic studies of the police's workaday life (Van Maanen 1973; Sausdal 2021, p. 891). This approach differs from traditional qualitative interviews by combining ethnographic conversations and observations of everyday practices in an organizational environment in order to move beyond what the employees might be able to express in verbal interviews.

Fieldwork observations were combined with semistructured interviews (Kvale 2008) with all staff, and with seven gang defectors, whose exit processes were closely observed, including observations of the staff's handling of their casefiles. I conducted a total of 16 interviews lasting 1–3 h with the staff in their workplace and 10 interviews lasting 2–3 h with the gang defectors in their private settings. The seven cases represent gang defectors who are at different stages of the exit program: one had just commenced the program and went through relocation, two were 1–2 years into the program and involved in employment and housing measures, three were about to finalize the program and one had finalized it. I attended the defectors' encounters with the exit staff where they discussed acute problems relating to these stages of the program and interviewed them afterwards. According to the police, the cases shed light on common issues that both parties are dealing with during the program.

The material was thematically coded and analyzed using established ethnographic iterative techniques of continuous comparison, grounded theory and triangulation of data (Strauss and Corbin 1997). To gain access to the fieldwork, I went through a vetting process (equaling the British HMG baseline personnel security standard) prior to obtaining a security clearance (equaling the level of "confidential" in the U.S.). All data material has been anonymized using fictive names and adjustments of information to conceal personally identifiable information.

3. Conceptualizing Intimate Belonging

In order to conceptualize the notion of intimate belonging[1], I draw on Guenther's (2013) work on solitary confinement in supermax prisons in the U.S.. Examining the social and existential implications of solitary confinement, Guenther proposes that the individual becomes unhinged when they are denied contact with others' embodied subjects for too long. Without others' shared embodied experience and interpretation of the world, individuals lose touch with time, space, materiality and even with their body and senses. As they become unhinged from the rhythms, cycles and social habits of friends and family outside prison or of other inmates, their senses turn against themselves in destructive ways; their inborn relationality becomes an instrument of their own undoing so to speak. The devastating effects are particularly evident when isolated individuals start suffering from sensorial self-betrayal, such as hallucinations, insomnia, sensorial disorders and potentially self-harm (Guenther 2013, p. 197). The mechanisms of self-destruction, Guenther continues, arise within the individual's sensory system since their being-in-the-world depends on other individuals forming an intercorporeal part of their sensorial orientation:

> "This self-betrayal is only possible for beings who are complicated, whose subjectivity is not merely a point but a hinge, a self-relation that cannot be sustained in absolute solitude but only in relation to others." (Guenther 2013, p. xiii)

Guenther argues that the testimony of survivors of solitary confinement shows that embodied relationality and contact with others is fundamental to our capacity to feel, perceive and relate to the world in meaningful ways. If individuals are deprived of the

experience of other concrete persons in a shared or common space, it is possible for their own sense of personhood to diminish or even collapse (Guenther 2013, p. 34). In Guenther's phenomenological approach, intersubjectivity becomes the *hinge* to existence, a constitutive mechanism of human worldly embeddedness, without which the individual cannot exist (Guenther 2013, pp. 34–35).

In this article, I build on the argument that shared embodied experiences of the world function as a hinge to human existence, and that intersubjective exchange is at the core of this relational dynamic. The notion of intersubjectivity should *not* be understood as a form of knowledge of how others collectively represent the world, nor as the outcome of shared cognitive preunderstandings or cultural or moral ideals (Jackson 2007, p. 147). Rather, as noted by Jackson, intersubjective life is "born of experiences 'thoughtlessly' undergone together in shared situations over time" (Jackson 2007, p. 147). In this way, it refers to what Bird-David (1994) in the mid-1990s referred to as "we relationships" that rest on a "sharing perspective", like when "we" are sitting next to each other, looking at the world, and responding to the flow of this joint experience (Bird-David 1994, p. 599). Bird-David proposed that the "we-relation" is a key characteristic of band societies, but as we shall see, it is of no less relevance to modern welfare state encounters. However, as Jackson highlights, what springs from these thoughtless—embodied—processes of shared experiencing is not necessarily empathy or mutually congenial perceptions of the world, but the inherent ambiguity of "never knowing exactly what others are feeling, thinking or intending" (Jackson 2007, p. 148). Hence, when I refer to the concept of intersubjectivity, I do not intend to argue that individuals come to see the world as the other sees it, connect to the world in the same way as the other, or can grasp the other's sensorial experience of it. Inspired by Jackson, I take intersubjectivity to consist of a mutuality of being in situations over time, which includes the discursive incommensurability and misunderstandings that inform every intercultural encounter (Jackson 2007, p. 149). What I call "intimate belonging" thus points to the sense of worldly embeddedness that emerges from an embodied mutuality of being in a world that belongs to neither one nor the other perspective in a relationship (Jackson 2007, p. 159).

Building on the above understanding of the role of intersubjective exchange, this article explores in further ethnographic details the "who" and "how" that define the intersubjective quality of "hinging" in migrant families and the state in Denmark. In classic anthropological kinship studies, the family is understood as a primary site of intimate relationships that share an embodied experience of the world. The family represents physical proximity, touch and the sharing of history, land, space, food, genes, affects and more (Carsten 2004). Yet, as emphasized in the introduction to this special issue, new kinship studies have shown how kinship emerges through various forms of connections between intertwining state and family systems (Thelen and Alber 2017). The literature points to the wide scope of intimate relationships across the family–state divide that may fuel a sense of belonging to a social world. Furthermore, research shows that biological kin relations do not always represent a sense of togetherness or belonging. Families represent ambiguous arenas of closeness and distance, care and harm and contradictory dynamics in which kin relations affect each other in positive and negative ways (Mattingly 2014; Meinert and Grøn 2020). This also means that kin relations can become too risky, dangerous or difficult to handle and a need for "cutting" these relations emerges (Grøn 2020). As documented in various works of research, a range of state officials may be engaged in the acts of cutting and rearranging family ties, especially in cases involving so-called high-risk families (Bengtson and Mølholt 2018). In this article, I focus on the role of state authorities in situations where an imperative to replace risky kin relations emerges.

While the gang exit program does not compare to solitary confinement in the U.S., the notion of 'hinged intersubjectivity" provides an interesting theoretical take on the case of gang desistance. However, I briefly highlight some significant empirical differences between Guenther's material and mine, which bring forward a different emphasis on the notion of "hinging" in my research. In my study, the unhinging of individuals from

the rhythms, cycles, social habits and flows of others' embodied subjects does not only occur in periods of total social isolation, although such periods do also form part of the exit program (e.g., during stays in safe houses). Rather, gang defectors' experiences of becoming unhinged emerge at a slower, prolonged pace than in solitary confinement, as well as across various registers of their life when places, materials, practices, vocabularies and relations are gradually blocked and emptied out as intersubjective spaces. This process is driven by consent, as part of the gang defector's *deliberate* project of cutting relations that are perceived as a risk or threat. In contrast to prisoners in solitary confinement, mobility is at the heart of the gang defector's process of cutting relations, since physical distance and movement away from the gang territory and their entangled family environment are a precondition of the Danish exit program. Despite this very different context when compared with Guenther's study of survivors of solitary confinement, I argue that gang defectors also experience a disordering of the world as they know it. Following from this experience, their relationship with police officers may sometimes develop into new avenues for hinging; what is at stake, then, are some very concrete concerns related to the gang defectors' repositioning, such as "hinges to whom, where and how?".

4. Gang Desistance and the Danish Exit Program

The article seeks to open up a new space for a relational and intersubjective perspective on gang desistance that can contribute to existing criminological and social science literature on gangs. Criminological research has explored the impact of family relations on desistance processes, such as marriage (Farrington and West 1995), parenthood (Moloney et al. 2009; Decker et al. 2014) and gang relations that feel like family (Decker and Lauritsen 2002; Vigil 1988). The phenomenological approach offers a new look into issues of belonging as gang members seek to leave their criminal past behind. In line with the theme of the special issue of *Genealogy*, the article uses this approach to flesh out the complexities, dilemmas and ambiguities of kin and state relatedness, providing a deeper understanding of the fraught and precarious position of kin in desistance processes.

Criminological research shows that gang desistance involves a swift change in lifestyle, which often implies a radical cut with people and places related to the gang environment (Decker et al. 1996; Pyrooz et al. 2014). To support the reformative "change in lifestyle", and the difficulties it presents, the Danish gang exit program is based on personalized, pragmatic and responsive welfare work carried out by police officers, as well as social workers, who in different ways seek to place themselves in a position of trust. The staff is in frequent contact with the defectors with weekly, sometimes daily, encounters and personalized support to manage things at the most basic level. The program is based on long-term interventions with a limited number of individuals[2] and lasts 1–2 years, which means that the defectors built a relationship with the staff over a long time and on a regular everyday basis. The proximity of the program points to the intimate and affective character of contemporary European governance targeting crime and marginalization among urban migrant subpopulations (Shoshan 2016; Vollebergh et al. 2021). Intensifying the proximity of the program further is its multiagency approach with staff consisting of police officers, social workers and ad hoc collaborators such as prison and probation services, who can intervene into multiple parts of the defector's life and coordinate a range of welfare services. Clearly, there are strong racialized dynamics involved in these forms of interventions (de Koning 2017; Fadil et al. 2019) and the police differentiate between who they protect and not with the interventions. Shining light on the potentially added issues of gang desistance when defectors come from a migrant background, the Danish case shows that intimate and personalized policing does not necessarily eclipse race but plays out within a wider context of structural racialization in Denmark.

5. Migrant Families and Street Gangs in Urban Denmark

In Denmark, the majority of gang exit candidates are of ethnic minority background and form part of the street-gang environment in deprived migrant neighborhoods (Petersen

and Ladefoged 2018). In Denmark's second largest city, Aarhus, such neighborhoods are located along an outer ring road, which encircles the inner city and is crossed by four major arterial roads to the city. While the ring road forms a clear line between the city's white inner-city middleclass neighborhoods and migrant housing projects on the outskirts of town, the four arterial roads constitute a different, and perhaps more invisible, kind of urban boundary, namely that between different gang territories. As in other parts of the world (Wacquant 2008), these gang territories represent interstitial areas in the city, in the sense that they are spaces that intervene between one thing and another (Thrasher 1936, p. 22). Located between inner-city middle-class areas, and trade and industrial areas outside the city, the neighborhoods consist of concrete social housing blocks populated by precarious groups of migrants, a majority of whom struggle with social exclusion, unemployment and marginalization. A majority of families living in the largest of these housing estates, called Gellerupparken, as well as adjacent housing estates along the ring road are refugees of Palestinian background who fled the Lebanese civil war in the 1980s. Other large groups of ethnic minority background are Somalis who fled the Somali civil war in the 1990s and groups of Arabic, primarily Iraqi and Kurdish, background. By the end of 2010, the district of Brabrand-Gellerup, where Gellerupparken is located, was populated by 9291 residents, out of whom 7887 came from "Third World countries" (Aarhus Municipality 2010), over 50% of the adult population was on welfare subsidies and around 45% of the population was under the age of 18 (Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs 2019). Neighborhoods such as Gellerupparken are classed by the Danish authorities as "hard ghettos", a classification which is based on the high level of unemployment, welfare benefits, youth crime and violence and various social problems. In this way, Danish hard ghettos are politically defined as areas and populations in high risk of crime and various forms of social deviance. As I have described elsewhere (Johansen and Jensen 2017), the Danish case offers a particular view on how the state responds to these high-risk populations. While ghettos, slums, inner-city areas and suburbs in other parts of the world are often abandoned in a neoliberal withdrawal of the state, this is clearly not the case in Denmark. Instead, the state is intensely present in the areas and seems to "lavish" money and expertise on the problems at hand (Johansen and Jensen 2017, p. 299). Most of the neighborhoods in Aarhus are based on government-based social and housing policy and have been gentrified following a mixed-class paradigm (Bach 2019b). They appear now as a mix of old dilapidated apartment buildings, modernized high-rises, single-family houses, a range of institutions, youth clubs, municipal services and neighborhood police stations.

Like in other large-scale housing projects in the big Danish cities, this mosaic urban landscape provides a home for an intimate migrant environment constituted by diasporic kinship networks (Kublitz 2016) and a vibrant multiethnic society with local bazars, mosques, shisha cafes and various ethnic community associations. The Palestinian families whom I have known since my first fieldwork in Gellerupparken ten years ago (Johansen 2013) constitute large extended kinship networks, who are closely interrelated in their everyday social life (see also Ismail 2021). Women meet, talk, dine and smoke shisha pipes together as evenings arrive; men meet, talk, play cards and hang out in the cafes and the local bazar, and while parents socialize, children are playing in the hallways and outdoors and their elder siblings are hanging out in a lively youth environment in the streets and youth clubs (Pardue 2022; Bach and Schneidermann 2022). Many of the families have known each other for generations, they fled the civil war together, their relatives in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon live next door to each other, and they describe their community as a social environment where "everyone knows everyone" and where everybody talks and gossips about each other (Johansen 2019).

Most gang defectors who go through the local gang exit program in Aarhus were born and raised in the housing estates on the outskirts of the city. Just as their families have created and nurtured an intimate social environment, the street gangs bustling about these neighborhoods constitute closely knit social networks of childhood friends; everyone knows everyone, as they are children of families from the same social circle. According to AK

and his friends, like in other street gang environments, gang fights are primarily triggered by interpersonal conflicts and shifting gang constellations that result in experiences of betrayal. In other big Danish cities, the immigrant-based street gangs include Loyal to Familia, Black Army, Black Cobra, Bloodz and Brothas (Sløk-Madsen et al. 2021, p. 365). While all of these gangs have attempted to establish themselves in Aarhus—some of which have led to internal destabilization of the local gang environment and bloody trenchlike warfare—none of them have succeeded. According to the local gang defectors, the street gangs in Aarhus are too difficult to organize. They consist of shifting constellations between loosely structured networks of friends and enemies who run their own business. The gangs take names after their neighborhood territory, such as the Brabrand Gang (*Brabrandgruppen*) or the Gang from Trillegaarden (*Trillegårdsbanden*). In our interviews, the gang defectors emphasize that they went to school in other parts of the city as part of a government-based ethnic dispersal strategy, but they rarely were out of their home neighborhood after school. "We grew up on the blocks", AK said, "and the street became home":

> *"When you are part of the street, you are in the street. You get up at ten, get dressed and then you start your car. When you eat your breakfast it is at the local square, you are in the street. Then, perhaps, you hold the drug phone [mobile phone that people call to order drugs] for some hours, everything takes place in the streets, you eat, you hang out with people. You also know if something is about to happen somewhere in the streets, then you know who it involves and where, you are familiar with people's whereabouts. A person who is in the street knows more about the streets than anyone else. This also means that you get to know if someone is in trouble."*

When gang members are children of parents who engage in the same social circle, and who live in the same neighborhood and share migration roots, history, traditions, religion, language and family bonds, gang life becomes embedded in family life. Hence, in these large housing estates, kinship formations entangle with gang formations within a wider social network of noncriminal relationships (see also Kalkan 2021). Gang desistance, then, becomes a complicated affair of cutting and/or keeping relations between gangs and kin. Complicating this process further is the marginalized position of the gang defectors, as they have little or no experience in socializing with people outside their community. To the gang defectors, what stands instead of "ganging" is thus a position in unfamiliar places and positions, where new forms of relatedness to the Danish state and majority society are key to their social survival.

6. Becoming Unhinged

When AK left the gang, he spent three years cutting his relationship to a large part of his family as part of the exit program. According to AK, this was a two-fold process: part of it was based on his own decisions to disengage from gang relations, while another part of it was the result of his family's reaction to his desistance. All the gang defectors that I interviewed during fieldwork shared the experience of having to cut their relationship with kin relatives in the gang environment, and a number of informants were also talking about the hardships of being excluded from their family. In the following, I unfold AK's experiences of cutting with kin relatives on the one hand, and of being cut out of the life of the family on the other hand—in other words, his complex experiences of a world where he was deprived of significant others (Guenther 2013, p. 240).

According to AK, the parking lot in front of his father's garage was the closest he would ever be to the city after leaving the gang, and the only safe place for us to meet. With his father and brother working in the garage behind us, and the ring road connecting the industrial area with the long line of housing projects in front of us, AK was welcoming me to a place where he still felt that he belonged. His opening remark suggested that the garage was neither gangland, nor was it "no-man's land", but somewhere in between, as he said:

> *"When I left the gang, I went from having a strong sense of belonging to becoming a total stranger. I belonged to the street and to my family, that is how it is when you 'think with*

the street', you live there, and your family's home is there. I was just one among all the other 'Arabs' in the street. Then I became this stranger in a place in the suburbs, where I had absolutely no relations, no family, no friends, no history. This garage, this is not the street. But its not the suburbs either, because my dad is here."

While we were talking, AK's brother walked by, greeted us, and disappeared between a pile of wrecked vehicles at the dump next to the garage. AK pointed at him and told me that his brother had just gotten out of jail and moved into AK's apartment in the suburbs. "He is one of the few I got to keep", AK said, referring to the gang exit program. During our conversations, AK depicted his gang desistance process as a long and painful "death" followed by a resuscitation that had brought him back to life in the shape of a stranger or a ghost. He described the process as a disruption and reshaping of ties of belonging since he was deprived of his network of social relations, particularly kin relations, that would otherwise support, protect and give meaning to his precarious life (see also Guenther 2013, p. xxi). AK had decided to cut his relation to a number of cousins who made a living from organized crime, selling drugs and engaging with gangs. Furthermore, he had a close relationship with an uncle, who was also attempting to leave the gang, but who found it immensely troubling and went back and forth between gang life and gang desistance for several years. According to AK, he felt inclined to keep away from the uncle when he engaged with the gang, but sought to reconnect with him every time he tried to leave it, which made their relationships rather unstable:

"Not everyone left the gang. X, for instance, did you meet him? He is my uncle, he found it really hard, he moved away and then came back, many times, he still does stuff [crime]. It's really bad, really difficult, to keep the relationship. We disappoint each other, I guess. There is the requirement from the police that you move away, it is kind of a precondition of the exit program, so you have to make a decision, do you want to leave? I do miss spending time with him, chatting, he knows me, it leaves me empty, like you don't belong anymore. To anyone, anywhere. But my mind is not in the streets anymore, to keep it like that I have to stay away from him from time to time."

AK's disengagement from these kin relations began long before he enrolled into the gang exit program. He had been leading several gang conflicts, which had turned his neighborhood into a warzone marked by drive-by shootings, kidnappings, stabbings and trenchlike warfare. Dressed in flak jackets and constantly alert, he spent his time organizing territorial defense, revenge and violent attacks on rival gang members. As the conflicts intensified, several of his gang affiliates, including the uncle and some cousins, disappeared from the street environment, either because they were arrested or fled the area, and AK was threatened by rival gangs on a daily basis—he had no protection and felt abandoned by his family and friends. The pressure stemming from being alone and constantly being threatened finally made him call police officer Stefan, who enrolled him into the gang exit program, as he described:

"When you find yourself in a situation when you are totally alone, when no-one has your back, and you are under such a pressure from the other gangs that your life is constantly threatened—then you 'jump out'[leave the gang]. I was totally on my own, and I just made up my mind, I was sick and tired of it, it made no sense anymore, because the streets were 'empty', there was no-one left to fight for."

AK stumbled into the gang desistance process, going back and forth between the gang and the police for half a year before he eventually made the decision to leave the city for good. His first step into gang desistance was total isolation—or relocation as defined by the police—which means being placed in a single room at a hotel or in a summerhouse as far away from gang territory as possible. "This is the moment when gang desistance manifests itself", he told me, elaborating that, "you are alone in that room for a while, the silence brings you safety as well as boredom, restlessness, emptiness and panic all at once". Relocation is an intervention that is based on the acute need of protection, such as a safehouse. However, relocation is offered as part of a transition away

from the gang and comes with the expectation that the relocated person begins planning lifestyle changes. The person is assisted by the exit staff in issues of housing, education, employment, drug rehabilitation, welfare benefits and so forth. They have frequent contact during the relocation period, going through lists of housing possibilities and employment and schooling opportunities. At the same time, the gang defector's social circle is discussed, focusing on who can support them in the desistance process, who can know and who can *not* know about this process. In this way, the safe house is a space of transition, where gang desistance is plotted and the person's social network is turned inside out. The police use a network diagram as a method for these evaluations. The diagram is a visual system consisting of circles drawn inside each other on a whiteboard. A dot in the middle illustrates the defector's position in the network, dots placed at the first inner circle illustrate persons in close positions of trust, dots on the next circle illustrate persons at distance from the defector's life who can support his desistance and dots on the outer circle illustrate persons in peripheral positions who can still assist the process. Often, I have seen these diagrams with only a few names, which also include professionals in the exit staff. While the network diagram presents a momentary visualization of persons in positions of trust, it does not reflect the nature of their relationship or how close the contact is. For instance, AK placed his father and brother on the inner circle of the diagram, but his brother was imprisoned for more than a year during AK's exit program, and they only met when AK was temporarily allowed to pay prison visits. According to AK, his father only took part in arranging his employment in the car repair shop.

Ghosted by the Family

After relocation, a more profound process of repositioning takes place in which the gang defectors move away permanently from the gang territory. AK moved to the suburbs, realizing that he could not secure his own safety if he returned to his old neighborhood. Like in other urban centers in the world, where organized crime and excessive violence cause the displacement of offenders and their families (Cantor 2014), he had become a subject of internal displacement. An internally displaced person is a refugee in his/her own country, meaning that the person is forced to flee his/her area of residency but not his/her country. In the context of civil war or genocide, the internally displaced person is often blocked from returning to his/her home and family because the area is under siege, occupied by enemy forces, or systematically surveilled by rival parties. As research has shown, excessive gang wars and organized crime may cause similar processes of displacement leading to migration patterns from urban centers to suburban or rural areas (Vasquez et al. 2009). In a similar vein, we see how gang defectors in Denmark move from the cities to provincial areas with no association to criminal networks.

Due to the death threats that AK had received from former gang affiliates and rival gang members, he was excluded from visiting his parents and friends in his old neighborhood and he could not drive through any adjacent urban areas:

> *"There is no chance I can show up in the city or visit my family. I have not been there for years. My brother is in the same situation, he cannot appear in the streets. The prison services want him to show up once a week and register, but their office is right in the middle of town. So, fortunately, the lady there, she understands, she told him that she would drive to the suburbs or meet him at the garage for registration."*

The forced displacement was not the only radical way that the gang defectors were cut out of the life of their family. Moving away from their families implied an immediate disengagement from the daily routines and socialization in the community and exclusion from various forms of exchange, support or gossiping among families. AK experienced a new form of social isolation, in which he was cut out of the extended family's life and never contacted by anyone in his kinship network. His aunts, mothers of all of his cousins, who had constituted a central position of care in his childhood, simply kept out of touch. The aunts were still part of his parents' inner social circle, and the parents stopped talking about him, as if he had ceased to exist or had never existed as part of their lives. On top

of this experience, his mother suffered from severe depression and stayed at home for long periods of time, during which they would lose contact. His younger siblings were out and about with their friends, and weeks, sometimes months, would pass without any visits or phone calls. AK perceived this experience as becoming a ghost in the family, as he explained:

> *"It feels like being totally invisible to people, a ghost that lurks around the suburbs, as if you never existed, or as if they have all turned to orient themselves elsewhere."*

Ghosting is a concept that has gained attention in debates about interactions on social media. In the social media context, the concept refers to the situation in which one party in a relationship suddenly erases the other party without empathy, warning or further explanation (as in the act of deleting a friend from a list of friends on a social media or dating site). In a recent newspaper debate, Kankan—head of the "Exit Circle", an organization working against family or partnership violence—took up the concept to describe how migrant men and women increasingly reported that they were being ghosted by long-term partners or family relatives (Kankan 2021). Kankan notes that these narratives relate to experiences of alienation, in which people describe how they are left in a "no-man's land", and that they are cut out of relationships without further explanation of why this is happening. This experience of being ghosted—or in AK's words, of being transformed into a ghost—captures a fundamental dimension of gang defectors' experiences of becoming unhinged from the life of significant others and the rhythms of the migrant community that used to constitute a central space of belonging in their lives.

AK's case is illustrative of how the exit program engages migrant street gang defectors from Danish "hard ghettos" in a complex process of unhinging, which implies elements of internal displacement, the loss of significant kin relations and experiences of losing touch with community routines and forms of family sociality. In this particular case, unhinging has deep social, emotional and existential ramifications, such as experiences of alienation, exclusion and distorted self-perceptions, such as the feeling of being a ghost. Resonating with Guenther's concept of unhinging as intertwined with experiences of social death (Guenther 2013, p. xx), the gang defectors perceive their desistance as a process of uprooting in which they simply cease to exist in their family's life and, in effect, stop relating to the world through an embodied family perspective.

7. Intimate Becomings: Hinging, and the Police Officer as Temporary Kin

While Guenther's phenomenology of unhinging resonates with some aspects of gang desistance in Denmark, her work does not address the corresponding and similarly important notion of *hinging*. In this final section, I approach the concept as an empirical entity, which the police perceived and framed as a substantial function of their intervention. What I call hinging points to the way in which the exit program was based on personalized policing, in which the relationships between gang defectors and police officers became a vehicle for the defectors' ways of relating to a noncriminal world. This intimate characteristic of the exit program is reflected in the way the police officers depicted the relationship as a "hook", or a way of "placing a hook" for the gang defectors to grab hold of, so that they may be drawn out of the gang environment:

> *Police officer: "The relationship we have is critical. If we do not succeed in establishing trust there is no program. This is what relational work is all about, establishing a relationship that is strong enough so that they rely on us in guiding them. We are placing a hook to catch a hold of them [få dem på krogen]."*

As the citation shows, the police described the exit program as being based on a high degree of citizen involvement, and they emphasized that the collaboration with the gang defectors was an essential part of the intervention. In our interviews, they noted that the establishment of a relationship of trust was imperative to this collaboration. As such, they understood the relationship as an essential means through which to gain the gang defectors' consent and engagement in exit measures aimed at lifestyle changes.

This personalized relationship—or "hook"—was of a particular nature. Firstly, the police and gang defectors described how it was often established and maintained through moments of acute stress and crisis. The police officers were busy reacting to incoming calls from the gang defectors during escalating gang conflicts, in which they had to coordinate with local emergency forces in order to intervene in violent fights. The incidents required urgent attention and the police officers were required to be available 24/7 for this specific task. If they had succeeded in placing themselves in a position of trust, the gang defectors would contact them directly on their work cellphones instead of calling the police station. Hence, every once in a while, a key part of the police's workaday life implied being present in situations of violence in order to protect the gang defectors. In almost all of the cases I observed during fieldwork, a string of incidents had occurred in which the gang defectors and police officers had found themselves "in it together" during street shootings, car chases, fights or other incidents of threat and victimization. The exit program's police were not necessarily present in the streets, but they were present on the phone during the incidents and coordinated closely on site with intervening neighborhood police officers, and they were present after the incidents. Amir, a 25-year-old gang defector who had fled the neighborhoods on the western outskirts of Aarhus during a local gang war, vividly described such action-packed moments during which he was supported by Niels, another police officer in the exit program:

> Amir: "Some guys from [name of gang] were waiting outside my apartment, and when I looked out the window, I could see my brother walking past them and they just started beating him to the ground. I ran out the door and attacked them, nobody can beat up my brother, I found my knife and attempted to attack. If people threaten my brother, I get insane. I could hear cars, the whole [rival] gang was gathering around me, but we had already called Niels, and the crew of neighborhood police showed up . . . they beat me to the ground with batons to cool me down, I was insane."

> Niels: "When Amir called, I rushed out the door, calling the neighborhood police station from my car, getting everybody assembled. They came just in time to prevent a massive fight, but were surrounded by [name of gang], people screaming and attacking, we had to bring in the dog patrol. During such incidents your whole nervous system is alert."

> Amir: "There is this personal contact, you see this particular incident, when I was in trouble, the first to call was not my family or my friend, no, it was Ole and Niels, I screamed to my cousin "call Niels", so he called him. It was self-defense."

Amir's and Niels's narratives point to the way that the police became immersed in the gang environment through moments of acute crisis. Another example of this mechanism was Amir's close friend Mohammed, who was also in the exit program, and had been subjected to several attempts of kidnapping by rival gangs. Each time, he had called Niels or Stefan, who would intervene or come to fetch him. One of the incidents involved a car chase during which he decided to drive to the central police station while calling Stefan on the way:

> Mohammed: "I was driving 150 k's [km/hour] from Aarhus West to the central police station, screaming on the cellphone so that Stefan could hear me, trying to explain where I was heading and that I needed help. When I got there, I stopped front of the police station, blocking the traffic, four cars coming up on the side of me with all these guys wearing masks and weapons. I just sat there and the police came running out. They arrested all of them guys from [name of gang] [laughs]."

As the citation shows, Stefan was intensely present during the car chase, guiding Mohammed on the phone and coordinating with other police officers to intervene when Mohammed arrived at the police station. The examples illustrate the different ways in which the police became involved in incidents of gang violence, sending police to fight and arrest rival gangs to protect the gang defectors, or physically pacifying the gang defectors to prevent them from inflicting harm on others. These forms of shared embodied experiences of violence were not new to the gang defectors; in fact, they were essential to the way the

gangs were internally integrated through conflicts with others (Thrasher 1936). As research has shown, gang life consists of shared forms of violent intercorporeality and protection with kin and gang members (Rodgers 2009; Jensen 2008). Violent intercorporeality thus serves as a crucial way of hinging to the social world of gangs. By taking part in these incidents, the police were drawn into the violent intercorporeality, and a potential new hinge was made.

In my interviews, the gang defectors referred to the intense contact with the police officers under such life-threatening circumstances as "situations when the police really showed that they care", as exemplified by AK's quotation in the introduction of this article. Both gang defectors and police officers pointed to the violent incidents as something extraordinary, as a mutuality of being that moved them beyond their formal positions as police and policed, and as situations that occurred day and night, beyond the boundaries of a working day. The gang defectors referred to the police officers' presence as a sign of commitment and care. Besides the extraordinary incidents, the less spectacular but nonetheless pervasive process of "placing a hook"—or creating a hinge—occurred through the intimate presence of the police in the gang defectors' everyday lives. Frequent encounters and meetings were held with the gang defectors in their immediate surroundings—in their neighborhood, family home, relocation spots, fitness and boxing centers, or even their workplaces. These encounters were inherent to the way that the collaboration was run by the exit program staff. While a potential hinge was established to the police through such ordinary and extraordinary forms of intercorporeality, it was also acutely actualized in situations when the gang defectors were "drawn out" of the gang environment. In Amir's case, this process implied being physically fetched by the exit staff when he decided to move out of his neighborhood. In this case, Amir's social worker from the exit program, Ole, held a central role, since he had collaborated closely with the police and Amir on his housing situation. I include this example to point out that the entire exit staff immersed themselves into the intimate environment of the gang defectors but in different embodied ways. Ole had given Amir one day to pack a suitcase and be ready to leave the neighborhood for good. The same night, Ole drove to the neighborhood, went to the apartment and sat down on Amir's couch:

> Amir: "Ole entered the apartment and sat down on the couch. I remember that he pointed at the suitcase and said 'you really mean it, don't you?', and I nodded my head. For a while we just sat there in silence, the apartment was quiet, it smelled of food. It had been my home for all these years, I had spent 100,000 kroner on decorating it, it was placed next to the block where I grew up and where my parents still live. Then he got up and said: 'let's go', like you know—let's get out—and I grabbed the suitcase and went out the door, I turned the key around and gave it to him."

Togetherness in such critical moments provided the staff and the gang defectors with experiences of atmospheres, affects, spaces and practices related to specific places and people that they would later take up at meetings when future prospects of a life without crime were discussed, for instance when drawing network diagrams. It thus laid the ground for a deeper process of hinging on a new, noncriminal social world through the police, as well as the social workers.

The personalized, emotional and intimate relationship between the gang defectors and the police officers illustrates several important points about the mechanisms of hinging in the context of gang desistance. As the gang defectors moved away from the gang territory and disengaged from relations to kin and gang members, the police officers became the only persons with whom they could share an embodied experience of the gang environment. Having "been there" with the gang defectors, met people, talked to their family, seen places and experienced the threats and dangers that eventually made the gang defectors leave their gang, the police officers represented a perspective from the inside, which nobody else on "the outside" could provide. The embodied forms of intercorporeality offered a social space that moved the police officers and gang defectors beyond the domain of the state and the formal aspects of the exit program such as its

aim, means and effectiveness. The intercorporeality was instead defined by a flow of joined experiences and the deeper personal knowledge that they gained of each other, their experiences of the other in person and not in type, as well as their perception of coalescence as they gave away a part of their self in moments of crisis. While the police officers represented a view from within the gang environment, they also represented a very tangible view from outside, as representatives of the welfare state. From this perspective, they brought forward the welfare state's imperatives to employment, housing and education as indicators of proper citizenship and belonging to Danish majority society. In this regard, the encounters and relationships between the police officers and the migrant gang defectors were enfolded in deeper intersectional structures and discourses of belonging between the state and its migrant other (Olwig and Paerregaard 2011). However, as Amir's, Mohammed's and AK's cases reveal, the social dynamics influencing these encounters were far more complex than can be grasped by an analysis of their opposing positions as representatives of state and margin. Placed in the role between the inside and outside of the gang environment, the exit program staff became temporary replacements of kin and gang relations and potential hinges to something new. As we have seen, this embodied and intimate relational form of policing paved the way for an emerging form of hinging, which is precarious and fragile in character, but which also provides a possible opening for shaping new ties of belonging to a world outside the gangs.

8. Concluding Remarks

This article has argued that the concept of (un)hinging provides us with an analytical prism to explore the lived experiences of belonging among some migrant gang defectors in Denmark. Based on ethnography on gang desistance processes among members of migrant street gangs, the article has shown how police officers and gang defectors engage in a project that focuses on belonging between gangs, kinship networks and the state. Most gang defectors who go through Danish gang exit programs come from migrant families who live in Danish "hard ghettoes" where kinship formations are entangled with gang formations in an intimate migrant community. To these migrant gang defectors, the desistance process implies elements of forced displacement, the loss of kin relations, exclusion and ghosting by the family and experiences of alienation emerging from a life in unfamiliar places and positions outside the gang and family environment. To assist the gang defectors in this difficult process, the exit program is based on personalized, emotional and intimate forms of relationality between the gang defectors and the police officers. The personalized relationship is established through moments of violence and acute crisis, when the police officers must secure the safety of the gang defectors. In incidents of gang violence, the police were drawn into a violent intercorporeality with the gang defectors, and a hinge was made, which would lay the ground for the gang defectors ways of embedding themselves into a new social world. To conclude the article, I propose to understand this process of "hinging" as based on the intertwinement of violence and intimacy, in which the police's embodiment of the power of the state and its monopoly on violence is perceived as protection and care by the gang defectors. As such, we may approach their violent intercorporeality as a "gift" that indebts the gang defectors "by their lives"—or, more accurately, by their way of living—to the police officers. It is this intersubjective form of exchange that constitute the core of new forms of relatedness between gangs, kinship networks and the state to this particular group of gang defectors in Denmark.

Notes

[1] The notion of "intimate belonging" is further conceptualized in the introduction of the special issue of *Genealogy* that the article is a part of.

[2] At the time of my fieldwork, an estimated 218 persons had finalized the exit program successfully at the national level, over the course of almost ten years (Johansen 2021, p. 11). There is no official registration of how these cases are distributed across the Danish police districts.

References

Aarhus Municipality. 2010. *Statistical Yearbook 2010*. Aarhus: Municipality of Aarhus.

Bach, Jonas S. 2019a. Demolition blues: Resistance against demolition plans in a Danish disadvantaged affordable housing estate. *Archivio Antropologico Mediterraneo* 21: 1–15.

Bach, Jonas S. 2019b. Ambivalent hopes: Residents' experiences of architectural transformations in Gellerup-Toveshøj. *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research* 1: 89–114.

Bach, Jonas S., and Nanna Schneidermann. 2022. Moral urban citizenship and the youth problem in a Danish ghetto. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 11: 20–34. [CrossRef]

Bengtson, Tea Torbenfeldt, and Anne-Kirstine Mølholt. 2018. Creation of belonging and non-belonging in the temporal narratives of young people transitioning out of care in Denmark. *Nordic Social Work Research* 8: 54–64. [CrossRef]

Bird-David, Nurit. 1994. Sociality and immediacy: Or, past and present conversations on bands. *Man* 29: 583–603. [CrossRef]

Cantor, David James. 2014. The new wave: Forced displacement caused by organized crime in Central America and Mexico. *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 33: 34–68. [CrossRef]

Carsten, Janet. 2004. *After Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

de Koning, Anouk. 2017. 'Handled with care': Diffuse policing and the production of inequality in Amsterdam. *Ethnography* 18: 535–55. [CrossRef]

Decker, Scott H., and Janet L. Lauritsen. 2002. Leaving the gang. In *Gangs in America*. Edited by C. Ronald Huff. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 51–67.

Decker, Steve, Scott H. Decker, and Barrik Van Winkle. 1996. *Life in the Gang: Family, Friends, and Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Decker, Scott H., David C. Pyrooz, and Richard K. Moule Jr. 2014. Disengagement from gangs as role transitions. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 24: 268–83. [CrossRef]

Fadil, Nadia, Francesco Ragazzi, and Martijn de Koning. 2019. *Radicalization in Belgium and the Netherlands: Critical Perspectives on Violence and Security*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Farrington, David P., and Donald J. West. 1995. Effects of Marriage, Separation, and Children on Offending by Adult Males. *Current Perspectives on Aging and the Life Cycle* 4: 249–81.

Flyvbjerg, Bent. 2006. Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12: 219–45. [CrossRef]

Grøn, Lone. 2020. Cutting/belonging. Sameness and difference in the lived experience of obesity and kinship in Denmark. *Ethnos* 85: 679–95. [CrossRef]

Guenther, Lisa. 2013. *Solitary confinement: Social death and Its Afterlives*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Ismail, Abir M. 2021. Care in practice: Negotiations regarding care for the elderly in multigenerational Arab Muslim families in Denmark. *Contemporary Islam* 15: 215–32. [CrossRef]

Jackson, Michael. 2007. Intersubjective ambiguities. *Medische Anthropologie* 19: 147–61.

Jensen, Steffen. 2008. *Gangs, Politics and Dignity in Cape Town*. Oxford: James Currey.

Johansen, Mette-Louise E. 2013. In the Borderland: Palestinian Parents Navigating Danish Welfare State Interventions. Ph.D. thesis, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark.

Johansen, Mette-Louise E. 2018. Navigating the Politics of Anxiety: Moral Outrage, State Responsiveness and State Accountability in Denmark. *Conflict and Society: Advances in Research* 4: 9–22. [CrossRef]

Johansen, Mette-Louise E. 2019. Fraught Parenting: Immigrant Parents' Chronic Double-Bind in Denmark. *Ethnography*, 1–20. [CrossRef]

Johansen, Mette-Louise E. 2020. Epidemic Policing: The Spreading of Counter-Radicalization in Denmark. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 38: 472–89. [CrossRef]

Johansen, Mette-Louise E. 2021. *Bandeexit i Østjyllands Politi og Aarhus Kommune*. Copenhagen: VIVE-Det Nationale Forsknings-og Analysecenter for Velfærd.

Johansen, Mette-Louise E., and Steffen Jensen. 2017. 'They want us out': Urban Regeneration and the Limits of Integration in the Danish Welfare State. *Critique of Anthropology* 37: 297–316. [CrossRef]

Kalkan, Hakan. 2021. *Veje til Respekt: Om gadens liv på Nørrebro*. Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Kankan, Sherin. 2021. Psykoterapeut: Ghosting er en form for psykisk vold. *Politiken*, December 10.

Kublitz, Anja. 2016. From Revolutionaries to Muslims: Liminal Becomings across Palestinian Generations in Denmark. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 48: 67–86. [CrossRef]

Kvale, Steiner. 2008. *Doing Interviews*. London: SAGE Publications.

Mattingly, Cheryl. 2014. *Moral Laboratories: Family Peril and the Struggle for a Good Life*. Oakland: California University Press.

Meinert, Lotte, and Lone Grøn. 2020. 'It Runs in the Family'. Exploring Contagious Kinship Connections. *Ethnos* 85: 581–94. [CrossRef]

Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs. 2019. *Liste over ghettoområåder pr. 1. December 2018*. Government Report. Denmark: Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs.

Moloney, Molly, Kathleen MacKenzie, Geoffrey Hunt, and Karen Joe-Laidler. 2009. The path and promise of fatherhood for gang members. *British Journal of Criminology* 49: 305–25. [CrossRef]

Olwig, Karen F., and Karsten Paerregaard. 2011. *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion and the Danish Welfare State*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Pardue, Derek. 2022. Are you in the club? The ambivalent role of youth clubs for Muslim immigrant youth at night in Aarhus, Denmark. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. forthcoming.

Petersen, Kirsten E., and Lars Ladefoged. 2018. *Unge i Gadegrupperinger: Hvad ved vi—Og hvad ved vi ikke: En Forskningsopsamling over national og International viden om unge i Bander*. Copenhagen: Danish School of Education, Aarhus University.

Pyrooz, David C., Scott H. Decker, and Vincent J. Webb. 2014. The Ties That Binds: Desistance from Gangs. *Crime & Delinquency* 60: 491–516.

Rhodes, Roderick Arthur William. 2011. *Everyday Life in British Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rodgers, Dennis. 2009. Slum wars of the 21st century: Gangs, Mano Dura, and the new urban geography of conflict in Central America. *Development and Change* 40: 949–76. [CrossRef]

Sausdal, David. 2021. Everyday policing: Toward a greater analytical appreciation of the ordinary in police research. *Policing and Society* 31: 784–97. [CrossRef]

Shoshan, Nitzan. 2016. *The Managament of Hate: Nation, Affect, and the Governance of Right-Wing Extremism in Germany*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Sløk-Madsen, Stefan K., David Skarbek, Andreas Hansen, and Alexander Rezaei. 2021. The Organization of Danish Gangs: A Transaction Cost Approach. *Trends in Organized Crime* 24: 361–77. [CrossRef]

Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet Corbin. 1997. *Grounded Theory in Practice*. London: SAGE.

Thelen, Tatjana, and Erdmute Alber. 2017. *Reconnecting State and Kinship: Temporalities, Scales, Classifications*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Thrasher, Frederic M. 1936. *The Gang: A Study of 1.313 Gangs in Chicago*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Van Maanen, John. 1973. *Working the Street; a Developmental View of Police Behavior*. M.I.T. Working Paper. Cambridge: MIT Sloan School of Management, pp. 681–73.

Vasquez, Eduardo A., Brian Lickel, and Karen Hennigan. 2009. Gangs, displaced, and group-based aggression. *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 15: 130–40. [CrossRef]

Vigil, James Diego. 1988. *Barrio Gangs: Street Life and Identity in Southern California*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Vollebergh, Anick, Anouk de Koning, and Milena Marchesi. 2021. Intimate States: Techniques and Entanglements of Governing through Community in Europe. *Current Anthropology* 62: 741–53. [CrossRef]

Wacquant, Loic. 2008. *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.