Deconstructing the (E)state

An interpretive content analysis of the Danish government's 2018 'ghetto-initiative'

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to study the connection between space, architecture, city planning, policy and human rights. The case studied is the so-called Danish 'ghetto-initiative', focusing on the government's 2018-plan "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos By 2030". The strategy entails initiatives legalizing sales, demolishing and renovation of residential areas that fulfils criteria based on resident's ethnicity and social status, classifying them as 'severe ghettos'. Through the application of philosopher Henri Lefebvre's theory on production of space, this thesis seeks to understand the Danish government initiative and the role the building environment plays, through a human rights perspective. The method used is an interpretive content analysis, applied to the government plan and the renovation plan for the housing area of Mjølnerparken, Copenhagen. The results of the study are discussed in relation to human rights indivisibility, state obligations, integration, and how arguments of space can be used to target minority groups and reinforce polarization.

Keywords: *Architecture, Building environment, Denmark, Ghetto-initiative, Human rights, Integration, Right to housing, Social Housing, Social engineering, Spatiality, Trialectic of space*

1   Introduction

The government wishes to prevent and dismantle parallel societies. We want to stop the development of where those living in a parallel society do not meet the ordinary Denmark. And where we some places see a behaviour which contradicts the rights, obligations, and democratic liberal values of freedom, that our society is built on. [...] With this strategy we want to also target the citizen-oriented proposals, so the initiatives will only apply to the areas and the citizens, with the greatest challenges. We do not want to limit the many, to get at the few.[1]

The focus of this thesis lies with the building environment and architecture in connection with human rights. The aim is to take a human rights approach to the built environment and city planning, to see what this can tell us about the concrete environment's impact on the lives of residents.

After World War II, social housing areas were developed in different parts of Denmark. These areas were built with the intention of meeting the need for more housing, as well as building houses that strengthen equality and improve social life for the residents.[2] Today, many areas that the Danish government classify as 'ghettos' are social housing projects which were constructed during this time. The interesting catch here is that housing areas built with intention of strengthening equality and sense of community, are to a great extent the same areas and buildings that inspired the 'ghetto-initiative', the law that directly violates the initial conception of social housing. In preparation for this study, I have been helped by discussions with the non-governmental organization *Emergency Architects and Human Rights,* who have provided valuable insight into the field and the case for this study, and they were the ones turning me onto this issue.

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[1] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, Økonomi- og Indenrigsministeriet. Copenhagen, March 2018. https://www.regeringen.dk/media/4937/publikation_%C3%A9t-danmark-uden-parallelsamfund.pdf, p. 7.
[2] Kristiansen, Otto Lerche, Mjølnerparken blev bygget til middelklassen. Dengang var der ingen, der talte om ghettoer, *Dagbladet Information.* 2017-12-27. https://www.information.dk/kultur/2017/12/mjoelnerparken-bygget-middelklassen-dengang-ingen-talte-ghettoer (accessed 09-04-2021).

The case studied in this thesis is what has become known as the Danish 'ghetto'-case. Starting in 2010, the Danish government has been publishing initiatives introducing criteria which classifies a residential area as a 'ghetto'. The first list of criteria was introduced in Denmark in 2010, but the one I will be focusing on, is the most recent and the so far most controversial one, published in 2018, aiming to get rid of all the areas listed as 'ghettos' by the year 2030.[3] The initiative is named 'Et Danmark Uden Parallel Samfund - Ingen Ghettoer I 2030' (English: A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettoes by 2030). As made apparent in the introductory quote above, the government uses the term 'parallel societies', to argue that the residents in the areas have not been properly integrated and are thus living in a society existing outside of the "ordinary" Danish one.

The initiative stirred up debate in Denmark as well internationally when it was introduced, and it is not hard to understand why. To classify as a 'ghetto', the residents of an area need to fulfil criteria based on high unemployment rate, certain percentage of criminal convictions, lack of (Danish) education, income below average, and more than half of the residents being immigrant and descendants from non-Western countries. 'Severe ghettos' are those fulfilling all the above criteria and have done so for more than four years consecutively.[4] This initiative, above all, entails laws permitting sales and demolishing of buildings in areas that classify as 'severe ghettos'. This action plan was introduced in March of 2018 and accepted in May of the same year.

My interest for this case springs out of the mere absurdity of what the initiative entails, and its radical nature, being outspokenly discriminatory based on ethnicity. Since it was first presented in 2018, much has been said about it being blatantly racist and this is undoubtably a major part of this case. However, as numerous studies have been done with the motive of diving deep into the subject of racial discrimination, this issue will not be my main focus. My interest in this case lies primarily in the connection to housing and architecture. I wish to go beyond the discourse of this political initiative, beyond confirming its absurdity and investigate the actual physical consequences of the ghetto-

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[3]Seemann, Anika, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, *Critical Social Policy*. SAGE Publications Ltd, Dec. 2020. doi:10.1177/0261018320978504., p. 2.
[4] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 16.

initiative. To find a middle ground, where the two fields of discourse and everyday life meet, and that is how I settled on studying the government's political initiative and the subsequent planning documents.

The international community has also taken notice of this case. In October 2020, *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* posted a statement where independent human rights special rapporteurs urged Denmark to refrain from selling off any buildings in Mjølnerparken, an area in Copenhagen listed as 'severe ghetto'. They argued the case needed to be examined by a court, to evaluate whether the laws permitting the sale was in breach of the resident's human rights.[5]

It is highly relevant to examine this initiative from a human rights perspective. There are many possible angles and focus areas one could have in this. What is highly remarkable, is how it relates to indivisibility and universality of human rights. The government is justifying the unfair treatment of the current residents in the targeted areas, with arguments about planning and building for a better future. But one can ask: who is this future meant for? It is not for the current residents, as a big part of the plan is to mix-up the current demographic, by forcibly moving people from the neighbourhood, and as making it possible to control who can move to a listed area. This opens for the question of whether the government is in fact failing to live up to their duties and responsibilities to protect the rights of all its citizens, and if some people's rights are being prioritised over others.

Definition of human rights differ depending on basic philosophical perspective. In natural law perspectives, human rights entitlements exist naturally for every human being, because of their humanity.[6] In contrast, according to the legal positivist perspective, where Jeremy Bentham was a distinguished voice, rights are only those that exist in legal texts.[7] Contemporary philosopher Brian Orend argues that human right sometimes are articulated in legal text, but not always.[8] He defines a human right as: "a high priority

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[5]Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN human rights experts urge Denmark to halt contentious sale of "ghetto" buildings*, Geneva (23 October 2020). https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26414&LangID=E (accessed 2021-05-26).

[6] Hayden, Patrick, *The philosophy of human rights* 1st ed. Minnesota: Paragon House, 2001., p. 4.

[7] Hayden, *The philosophy of human rights* p. 118.

[8] Orend, Brian, Human rights: Concept and context, Broadview Press 2002, p. 33.

claim, or authoritative entitlement, justified by sufficient reasons, to a set of objects that are owed to each human person as a matter of minimally decent treatment."[9] This is the definition I keep in mind when addressing human rights in my study.

Human rights treaties are texts where human rights are expressed.[10] The human right to adequate housing is contained in the right to adequate standard of living, expressed in the international treaties *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) from 1948, and *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) from 1966.[11] The freedoms contained in the right to housing are:

> ➢ Protection against forced evictions and the arbitrary destruction and demolition of one's home;
> ➢ The right to be free from arbitrary interference with one's home, privacy and family; and
> ➢ The right to choose one's residence, to determine where to live and to freedom of movement.[12]

Denmark has, by signing both UDHR and ICESCR, committed themselves to fulfilling the right to adequate housing for all its citizens.[13] In the statement from October 2020, released by independent human rights special rapporteurs, it is argued that by the percentage of 'non-western' residents in an area deciding if it is classified as a 'ghetto', it is highly relevant to suspect discrimination based on race and ethnicity. They argue also for the government breaching the right to adequate housing, as the sales of buildings can entail forced evictions for the residents.[14]

Philosopher Thomas W. Pogge argues for an institutional view of human rights, where a state and its institutions are the main duty bearers for upholding, and not violating, human

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[9] Orend, Human rights: Concept and context, p. 34.
[10] Craven, Matthew, Legal differentiation and the concept of the human rights treaty in international law, *European Journal of International Law*. Vol. 11, no.12, 2000: 489-519.
http://www.ejil.org/pdfs/11/3/540.pdf, 2000, p. 493.
[11] UN Habitat. *The Right to Adequate Housing*, Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1. (2014)
https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-managerfiles/Right%20to%20adequate%20housing.pdf.
[12] UN Habitat. *The Right to Adequate Housing*.
[13] UN Habitat. *The Right to Adequate Housing*, p. 1.
[14] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *UN human rights experts urge Denmark to halt contentious sale of "ghetto" buildings*

rights for its citizens.[15]. Pogge explains governmental human rights violations in the following way:

> Governments may do so by creating or maintaining (unjust) laws that permit or require human-rights violations or they may do so "under the color of law", i.e by perversely construing existing legislation as licensing human-rights-violating policies.[16]

He argues that this type of violation is especially reprehensible, as these wrongs are often disguised in legal text, and thereby visible to everyone.[17] Moral philosopher Hugh Breakey writes about human rights, corruption, and arbitrary power. Corruption is defined as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain".[18] He accounts for different outcomes as a subject is exposed to the arbitrary use of power, as an ongoing state. By one never being sure when the dominating arbitrary power will strike, the autonomy to direct their own life is undermined.[19]

The Danish 'ghetto-case' is most interesting when it comes to this thematic in connection with the physical environment. The government argues a better society will be created by breaking down the physical environment of the areas pointed out to be the 'problems', with a central argument being the ethnicity of the residents. What is the social goal with this initiative? To break up communities posed as threatening, and create basis for richer, more 'educated', more 'danish' citizens moving in.[20] Historically, human rights have aimed to shelter the individual from arbitrary treatment of the ruler. How does this resonate in this case?

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[15] Pogge, Thomas W., How should human hights be conceived? , In *The philosophy of human rights,* Hayden Patrick (ed.) 1st ed. Minnesota: Paragon House, 2001., p. 193.

[16] Pogge, How should human hights be conceived? , p. 193.

[17] Pogge, How should human hights be conceived? .

[18] Breakey, Hugh, Arbitrary Power, Arbitrary Interference and the Abuse of Power: Corruption, Natural Rights and Human Rights, *Responsible Leadership and Ethical Decision-Making.* Emerald Publishing Limited. 2017. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/S1529-209620170000017013/full/html, p. 1.

[19] Breakey, Arbitrary Power, Arbitrary Interference and the Abuse of Power: Corruption, Natural Rights and Human Rights, p. 6.

[20] Wang, Laura Friis, 20 ud af 28 ghettoer ville ikke være på ghettolisten, hvis uddannelse fra udlandet talte med, *Dagbladet Information*. 2020-11-23. https://www.information.dk/indland/2020/11/20-28-ghettoer-vaere-paa-ghettolisten-uddannelse-udlandet-talte (accessed 2021-26-05).

1.1 Background: The Danish 'Ghetto-case'

1.1.1 'Ghetto'

When American sociologist Louis Wirth wrote about 'the ghetto' in an American setting back in 1927, it was said to usually apply to areas where societies poorest groups lived, usually entailing recently arrived immigrants.[21] In contemporary Europe, 'ghetto' often defines an area where the residents are of cultural diversity and share the status of being excluded, example can be seen in France and The Netherlands.[22] Additionally, 'ghetto' does not necessarily entail people are forcibly living there, more commonly it is used for areas with extreme poverty and/or areas riddled with criminality and behavioural problems. Haynes and Hutchkinson, in their text "Symposium on the Ghetto*", refers to an essay on the discussion on 'ghetto' in a Dutch context, where the 'ghetto' is feared because it is constructed as an area where people share values and lifestyles that deviate from the main society. The 'ghettos' are constructed to threaten social integration, therefore mixed neighbourhoods are seen as desirable.[23]

1.1.2 Citizenship and Social Welfare in Denmark

After the end of World War II, the Danish welfare system became defined by universalism and large benefits - this is often referred to as the Nordic model. Labour and taxation were emphasized as the way the individual supported themselves and contributed to society. This functioned as basis for the welfare contract where citizens were expected to contribute in the form of labour, to enjoy the benefits of the welfare system. The society focused more on the individual, as social rights were tied to the individual and not to the family. This social democratic model had a strong strive for equality for everyone.[24]

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[21] Wirth, Louis, The ghetto, *American Journal of Sociology.* Vol. 33*,* no. 1,1927: 57-71. 0002-9602, p. 57.
[22] Haynes, Bruce and Hutchison, Ray, The ghetto: origins, history, discourse, *City & Community,* vol. 7, no. 4 2008: 347-352, p. 373.
[23] Haynes and Hutchison, The ghetto: origins, history, discourse, p. 373-374.
[24] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 5.

The term 'ghetto' had existed for a long time, but it was first introduced into the political discourse in Denmark around 1960.[25] It sprung out of the debate about the areas where so called 'guest-workers' settled, due to the high concentration of subsidized housing in those areas. Because these were seen as just 'guests', the situation of having areas populated by a majority non- ethnic Danes, was considered only temporary. [26] Entering the late 1990's, the Danish society looked quite different. The welfare system was now under pressure due to a combination of factors including high unemployment, increased immigration and decline in economic growth. The importance of each citizen to actively contribute to society was emphasized even more so, and new conditions that everyone needed to meet in order to qualify for benefits were introduced. One of the main forces behind this drive towards a focus on roles and duties of the citizen was the rise in immigration. The discourse around active contribution included being integrated, by embracing Danish culture, language and values. [27] Now, the term 'ghetto' was generally used also in official government papers.[28]

1.1.3 Social Housing Projects

Social, or public, housing ('almene boliger' in Danish) are buildings with support from public funding. They aim to be available to everyone, therefore the housing associations are not allowed to profit from renting them out, keeping rent costs down. In 2020, Denmark had around 589.707 social housing buildings, with 990.000 people living in them.[29]

Following the second world war, Denmark could not provide housing for all its citizens. As a solution to meet the rapidly growing population, quickly produced social housing projects were constructed. The projects had the aim of improving life for the residents

[25] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 6.
[26] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 7.
[27] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 5.
[28] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 7.
[29] Gudmand-Høyer, Sidse Martens, Livtag med 1960'ernes og 1970'ernes almene boligområder, *Gentænk byen,* Dansk Byplanlaboratorium 2020: 93-98.
https://www.byplanlab.dk/sites/default/files/Gent%C3%A6nk_Byen_0.pdf, p. 93.

and strengthening the community, which was reflected in the modernistic buildings. Most visually apparent in the architecture, are the influences from social democratic ideals of equality: every resident should have the same access to facilities, no resident should have more or less than their neighbour. This also meant that every apartment in a complex hade the same design. The hope of these housing projects was to improve everyday life for the residents. Approaching it from a rights-based perspective, you could say there was an intention to strengthen people's access to their human rights. Later, the ideals in housing design became more influenced by individuality and diversity than unity, and this change in ideals has affected the way the areas are being perceived today.[30]

The areas of Gellerup and Toveshøj, situated outside the city of Aarhus, were built in the late 1960's. These projects had the intention of creating light and green areas consisting of quality housing. In the remodelling plans for these areas, which followed the governments 2018 initiative, it is argued that the architecture has led to the area being closed off from the rest of society. The argument is that the combination of mainly consisting of public housing and lacking any paths running through the area, has been part of the growing 'ghettoization'.[31]

1.2   Purpose Statement and Research Question

The government initiative from 2018 targets people based on ethnicity and class, to facilitate going through with a radical agenda legitimizing forced evictions, demolition and remodelling of housing areas. This gives strong reason to suspect the resident's human rights are not being respected, leading to strengthening marginalization which risks having devastating consequences for people lives. Therefore, the state's strategy needs to be continually questioned.

The government's initiative is based on a logic that lacks validity. The individual 'immigrant' is blamed for not being integrated, thus other contributing factors are

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[30] Kristiansen, Mjølnerparken blev bygget til middelklassen. Dengang var der ingen, der talte om ghettoer.
[31] Helhedsplanen for Gellerup og Toveshøj. Vision og forandringshistorie, 2019-07-31. https://helhedsplangellerup.dk/derfor-goer-vi-det/vision-og-forandringshistorie/. (accessed 2021-05-26).

neglected, such as policies and actions of the state and its institutions. With this logic, the state does not feel bad imposing an initiative directly targeting 'immigrants' and their housing areas, as they are responsible for creating this unsustainable situation. The individual is not only being blamed for not being integrated, but they are also being punished for it.

Space plays a vital role in this case. The concept of space is a key point for understanding how the physical environment shapes everyday life and it can also reveal how access to human rights are strengthened or weakened. To investigate this case without regarding the physical space, risks missing critical human rights related problems. It makes relevant also a historical perspective, as the areas built with the vision of becoming utopias of social equality fifty years later are subject to be demolished through new legislation.

The purpose of this study is to highlight that the matter of space, design and architecture is not neutral but has direct consequences for its residents and society. I therefore wish to examine how the built environment and architectural design relates to human rights in the Danish governments initiative to dismantle 'parallel societies', to investigate if the plans for the new buildings can be said to embody the values of the initiative, and how it does so. This is done by finding keywords and themes in the texts, regarding physical space, that relates to human rights values.

The general question posed in this thesis is what can we learn, and what can be revealed by taking a human rights approach to the built environment and city planning, and seeing this concrete environment through a human rights lens? More concretely, the research question is:

What meaning is ascribed to physical space in the Danish government's case "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos By 2030" and the master plan for Mjølnerparken, and what can be revealed by applying a human rights perspective?

1.3 Material and Limitations

In this section the primary and secondary material for this study is presented. This section also accounts for limitations to the study, the criterions used for singling out the material as well as critical reflections on the sources.

1.3.1 Primary and Secondary Material

Two documents act as primary material for this study. The first is the Danish government's action-plan from 2018 "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos by 2030". This material has been chosen on background of being the central documents for the government's initiative and therefore central to this study's research question. The document contains 22 initiatives all aiming to break up the targeted areas. I have used the electronic version of the document, which was published in March 2018 by what was then called *The Department for Economy and The Interior.* The document is visually interesting and easily comprehensible, in contrast to typical dry government document. From the document, selections were made based on three categories: *Problems*, *Means* and *Aims*, which are further explained in the method section.

The second part of the primary material is the master plan for the ghetto-listed area Mjølnerparken located in Copenhagen. It is produced by Bo-Vita, a housing organization which is a part of Bo-vest, an association managing housing in all of Denmark. A master plan is the plan for reconstruction of an area listed by the government as a "severe ghetto". This document is relevant, as the housing associations are responsible for implementing the government's initiative. They run the risk of having the job overtaken by the state if they fail to live up to the criteria in the initiative.[32] Bo-Vita's master plan is in the form of a website. As these documents are concrete plans for renovation of the areas, they do not contain formulation of the *Problem*, the sections for analysis were therefore selected based on the categories *Aims* and *Means.*

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[32] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 7.

The secondary material used in this study aim to provide background and overview over the pre-existing research on the topics of architecture and human rights, as well as on the Danish 'ghetto-case'. Also included are materials on theory, Henri Lefebvre's work "The production of space" and on method, writings on content analysis and discourse analysis.

Due to the restrictions in time and scope for this thesis, limitations had to be applied when selecting the primary material. This means I have not had the possibility to analyse the entirety of the text, although it has been read. The parts selected are on the theme of building environment, on issues connected to human rights or on both. There are masterplans for other areas on the 'ghetto-list' in Denmark, which would also have been interesting to investigate. Another relevant and interesting angle would be conducting interviews and observations in the areas, but this is not the focus of this thesis. This means I cannot comment on actual experiences from the residents in the neighbourhoods. I would also add that this case is interesting and extremely relevant to study with other human rights related focuses than my own.

1.3.2 Sources

All the sources used in this thesis have been selected on background of being reliable and valid. The sources have been found through searches in academic databases, using keywords to the study. The texts included are mainly in English, apart from cases where they were not available in English, where I have then used texts in Danish. I have read many texts during the scope of this study, but only included the ones relevant to the field and the study. In cases where I have referred to facts stated in newspaper articles, these have been back up by references to academic articles, directly or in a later section.

1.4   Research ethics

The material analysed in this thesis are public documents. This means that reflections on the risks of exploiting or causing direct harm to any individual is not necessary, since I have not published any information not already accessible to the public. I have neither

conducted nor referred to any interviews in this study, therefore reflections on consent from any subjects are not required.

It is however relevant to reflect over any consequences that my study can have. It is always a challenge when working with material containing concepts charged with political meaning, as is the term 'ghetto'. In section 1.1.1, I have given historic context to the word, but it is important to discuss my usage of it, as it risks normalizing it, and contributing to further stigmatization. The term 'ghetto' is frequently featured in the primary material for this study and as such it has central meaning for the material. When referring to the government's policy, I use 'ghetto-case' or 'ghetto-initiative', as this refers to the government's radical language. Although, I refrain from repeating the word in my text when deemed not necessary for the logic of the analysis. When used by me, it is done with the intention of discussing how the term is being used in the primary material. I choose to use other words such as 'targeted areas' or 'listed areas'. The same goes with the word 'immigrant' which I do not to use when referring to individuals, but only to discuss when the text does so.

It is important to be transparent when conducting research of this quality. By following research best practice, I have been transparent throughout this process and have not taken credit for anything that is not my original work. References to all original material used have been declared with footnotes identifying the source. To be inspired and gain knowledge of the field, I have read many works on my subject, but no material has been used that is not included in the reference list.

2   Literature Review

In this section, prior works on the theme of this study are presented. It is divided into sections, all touching on different relevant subjects.

2.1   Architecture and Human Rights

"Architecture and Human Rights", by Hossein Sadri, a scholar in architect and urban design, is a text treating the themes of space, spatial rights and human rights. This text is featured to show how space and human rights is connected. Sadri is creatively linking spatial rights to human rights, which inspire me throughout my analysis.

Sadri argues that the concept of space is vital to understand architecture and human rights. Space is connected to physical conditions, such as buildings and dwellings, but it is also about the less concrete, such as existence, and in the bigger sense, life.[33] Spatial rights are defined as "rights related to the process of formation and use/change of spaces".[34] On the base of sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre's concept "Right to the city", Sadri focuses on two main rights that needs justification: 1. Rights to appropriation and 2. Property rights.[35] Since these are not enforced legally, Sadri argues for the need to justify spatial rights, by connecting them with extensive, universal human rights frameworks. Human rights responsibility lies with nation states, and spatial rights with everyday life.[36] Sadri compares the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Charter for the

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[33] Sadri, Hossein, Architecture and human rights, *Journal of Contemporary Urban Affairs.* vol. 3, no. 2, 2019: 173-183. https://doi.org/10.25034/ijcua.2018.47x14, p. 174.
[34] Sadri, Architecture and human rights, p. 175.
[35] Sadri, Architecture and human rights, p. 176.
[36] Sadri, Architecture and human rights, p. 182.

Right to the city and the European Declaration of Urban Rights. The result is the identification of 22 norms of human rights, that is related to spatial practices.[37]

2.2   Analysing the Danish 'Ghetto-case'

The following text is used to show how analysis on governments papers can be done. Anika Seemann, historian and legal academic, studies in her text "The Danish 'ghetto' initiatives and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004—2018" the 'ghetto-initiative' to see what can be said about changes in Danish policies, when it comes to social citizenship and welfare.[38] By using a policy and legal analysis, combined with conceptual history method, she examines the four 'ghetto' strategy papers from the Danish government, published in 2004, 2010, 2013 and 2018. The text offers a historic overview over changes in the idea of social citizenship, starting in the year 1890.[39]

Seemann argues that the 2018 'ghetto-initiative', promising to get rid of all 'ghettos', is the most extreme initiative yet. It contains a special focus on the alteration of the physical area, with the plan to reduce subsidized housing in the 'ghetto-listed' areas by 40 percent. The government demand that housing associations and municipalities present a plan how to reach this goal, and if they fail to do so the government will overtake the properties, to be demolished or sold.[40] Seemann argues a new kind of spatialized citizenship has been introduced, where a citizen's place of resident affects their level of social citizenship, as well as limits their access to certain rights.[41] The danger of the 'ghetto-case' is it risks altering the idea that once a member of society has achieved the full citizenship status, they are also to be treated equal.[42]

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[37] Sadri, Architecture and human rights.
[38] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018.
[39] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 7.
[40] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 14-15.
[41] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 16.
[42] Seemann, The Danish 'ghetto initiatives' and the changing nature of social citizenship, 2004–2018, p. 6.

2.3   Spatiality in the 'Ghettos'

"Reintegrating 'ghettos' into society – lessons learned from the Danish 'ghetto strategy'" is a text by the researcher Mette Mechlenborg, with background in building research and culture studies.[43] This text is featured in my study to show how Henri Lefebvre's theory the spatial trialectic can be applied to the Danish government papers. It focuses on the 2010 Danish 'ghetto' strategy, which had the aim of dissolving 'parallel societies' and re-integrate them into Danish society. By applying Lefebvre's spatial trialectic perspective onto three cases, Mechlenborg wants to see what this can tell us about what happens when a strategy is transformed into reality, and into settings in everyday life.

To philosopher Henri Lefebvre, spatiality is constituted of three factors: the perceived space, which is the physical environment, the conceived space, which is the discourse the physical environment is coated in, and the lived spaced, which is the result of the unification of the two former aspects.[44] Mechlenborg interprets Lefebvre's theory to mean that space has more meaning than the physical aspect alone. Space and buildings are covered with discourse, ideology and values, which come alive in the everyday life. How space is produces and reproduced has to do with how we interpret and make meaning of actual space and how it is coated with discourse.[45]

"A Place Outside Danish Society Territorial Stigmatisation and Extraordinary Policy Measures in the Danish 'Ghetto'" is a master thesis in field of human geography by Sara Høier Olsen. The aim is to investigate the impact of Danish government's initiative against 'parallel societies' in the areas listed as 'ghettos' by conducting fieldwork, as well as look into how the policies came to be, formed by political discursive practices.[46] This text emphasizes the role and importance of space in the 'ghetto-case'. It has been used as

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[43] Mechlenborg, Mette, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, *Nordic Journal of Architectural Research,* vol. 31, no. 1: 2019, 59-87. http://arkitekturforskning.net/na/article/view/1170.
[44] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 60.
[45] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 66.
[46] Olsen, Sara Høier, A Place Outside Danish Society. Territorial Stigmatisation and Extraordinary Policy Measures in the Danish 'Ghetto'. Masters thesis., Lund University, 2019. http://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/record/8981758.

inspirational source for my study, for how to analyse construction of space. Additionally, it inspired me to add a human rights perspective to this case.

3   Theory and method

This section outlines the theories and methods used in the study, both selected on background of relevance to the theme and primary material. To be able to answer the research question, the first step is to breakdown the physical environment, which is the reason Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space is applied. The section introduces the concepts used as tools in the analysis. It goes on to cover the method, which in this study is content analysis.

3.1   Theory

3.1.1 Normative Theory

Conducting a study in the field of human rights entails coming from a theory normative in its character. Normative theory is concerned about how the state of things ought to be, it is about ideas that should be upheld by for example an actor or institution. Normative theory can therefore fill the purpose of scrutinizing how these actors are upholding and approaching certain moral principles identified by the researcher.[47] Human rights theory is normative as it follows this idea, as rights can be seen as ideals that ought to be upheld and followed. This contrasts with descriptive theory which aims to describe and increase understanding about something while remaining objective.

With this distinction established, it is relevant to reflect over my positioning towards a normative human rights theory. My theory is normative as Lefebvre's theory is used to scrutinize how human rights ideas are present in political policy and documents on city

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[47] Chandler, David, Universal ethics and elite politics: the limits of normative human rights theory, *The International Journal of Human Rights,* vol. 5, no. 4, 2001: 72-89, doi: 10.1080/714003735, p. 73.

planning. Through this, I argue for how something should be, that a human rights perspective should be embedded in these processes.

3.1.2 Lefebvre's Production of Space

The theory applied in this study includes parts of Henri Lefebvre's production of space and spatial trialectic. This theory is relevant to my study as it aims to break down and analyse physical space, a field in which Lefebvre was a prominent figure. I have also taken inspiration from Mette Mechlenborg that presents a comprehensible model when applying this theory onto the 'ghetto-case'.

Lefebvre was a French sociologist and philosopher, with a Marxist standpoint.[48] In his book from 1974, "The production of space", he argues there is need for more and deeper knowledge of space. According to him, prior works on space has offered a description of spatiality but has lacked in levels of analysis. A deeper knowledge about space is important, he argues, because it would go beyond a shallow description of space. Lefebvre want to do more than see the space in a theoretical sense, but to conceive it. What he means by this, is that there should be paid attention to details and relationships within the space, as they are all part in forming reality.[49] Central to his theory, is the notion of how an idea of space is transformed into actual space.[50]

Lefebvre argus that there ought to exist a practice of criticising space, in likeness with that of artistic works. He writes:

> There would certainly seem to be a need for such criticism: its 'object' is at least as important and interesting as the aesthetic objects of everyday consumption. We are talking, after all, of the setting in which we live. [51]

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[48] Elden, Stuart, *Understanding Henri Lefebvre*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. 2004, p. 1.
[49] Lefebvre, Henri, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford, UK, Cambridge, Mass., USA,
Blackwell, 1991, p. 94.
[50] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 66.
[51] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 92.

Being inspired by sociologist and philosopher Karl Marx, the notions of power and the state are central to this theory. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the state gained increasing power as organizer of society. [52] Lefebvre describes the state as "a total subject, who acts to maintain and reproduce its own conditions of existence (along with its foundation in specific social classes and fractions of classes)".[53] Lefebvre argues the state is the absolute central body of power which arranges society through codes, of which they are in total power and not bound by themselves. In the context of space production, he means that the state is always present. By seeing space as nothing but a fixed and objective place we run the risk of forgetting this important fact.[54] This makes political power a central part of space, and thus, merely seeing what is in the space is not enough. A political perspective is vital when decoding space.[55] Lefebvre argues that habitat and housing are an architectural matter, while larger spaces and territories are a matter for planners and economists. With a unifying theory of the three fields, the areas of architecture, urbanism planning an economy could better come together.[56]

A core idea for Lefebvre is that space is more than merely a passive location but is active and fluctuating.[57] Therefore, the aim is to craft a theory that works as a tool to analyse how space is constructed, revealing important information about production of space.[58]

Lefebvre identifies three fields of space, which all spaces constitute of: *the perceived* (the physical), *the conceived* (the mental) and the *lived experience* (the social), which make up what he calls the trialectic of space, or the *perceived-conceived-lived-triad*.[59] These are in spatial terms defined as: *spatial practice*, *representations of space* and *representational spaces.[60]*. To clarify what is meant by these terms, Lefebvre applies the metaphor of the human body.

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[52] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 23.
[53] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 94.
[54] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 94.
[55] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 162.
[56] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 12.
[57] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 11.
[58] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 7.
[59] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 11; 40.
[60] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 33.

The *perceived space* can be likened to body parts, that which you can see and touch.[61] It refers to how space is being used and can refer to both practice in space as well as the built environment.[62] In my analysis I focus on the aspects of perceived space, when discussing texts that concern concrete physical environment.

The *conceived space* can be likened to the knowledge of the body, like anatomy or physiology, and its relations with its surroundings. The conceived space can be seen through images, values, signs, definitions.[63] Lefebvre argues that it is important that the conceived space is regarded when spaces are constructed, such as in architectural design, because knowledge and ideology has an impact on the physical concrete surrounding.[64] He poses the question of how and when this representation comes into being for the architect, and whose interest is served when it takes a concrete form.[65] In my analysis, the concept of the conceived space is used to identify and analyse the discourse of the space and the buildings, the values and ideologies that can be discovered in the plans and documents. An important feature to the conceived space, it that it is directly connected to power. Mechlenborg explains that spatiality has to do with power, and power is connected to the conceived space.[66] Lefebvre mentions a logic of visualization, referring to connotations of spaces and symbolism of buildings. He mentions the example of the vertical skyscrapers of state buildings, the phallic shape conveying authority to those who view it – metaphorical logic.[67]

The third field in the triad is the lived, often referred to as *lived experience*. This is the most complex according to Lefebvre. Keeping up with the anatomical metaphors, it can be likened to the sexual organs. The lived experience is when the perceived and the conceived are combined. This is where life happens and therefore there are no concrete products stemming from the lived experience, rather, it takes the form of symbols, culture,

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[61] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 50.
[62] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 61.
[63] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 61.
[64] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 42.
[65] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 44.
[66] Mechlenborg, Reintegrating ghettos into society: Lessons learned from the Danish ghetto strategy, p. 66.
[67] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 98.

and trends.[68] For the purpose of my analysis, lived experience is identified in the texts as that which concerns everyday life in the areas.

Lefebvre emphasises that the spatial triad is not to be treated as a mere abstract theoretical model, as its value lies in its applicability on reality.[69] Indeed, the theory provides highly useful functions for the analysis in this thesis. Lefebvre also stresses that since it is a triad, the three fields are not to be separated, as they are not easily distinguishable in real life. They are intertwined and the one cannot exist without the other and the relationship between them can never be stable.[70] I have distinguished them in this section for sake of clarity and facilitating the use of them as analytical tools, but I am aware of their interwoven nature throughout my analysis.

3.2   Method

In this section, the methods used for analysing the primary material is presented. This is interpretive content analysis, in combination with Lefebvre's analytical tool trialectic of space, which also entails elements of discourse analysis. The first section covers the choice of a qualitative method, followed by an outlining of the basic content analysis, next the interpretive content analysis is described and lastly is clarified how Lefebvre's trialectic of space and discourse analysis is also part of the method.

3.2.1 Methodological Reflections

For this study a qualitative method is used. A qualitative method is a method that does not rely on numeric data and is often applied in the field of humanities aiming to understand human action.[71] In contrast, quantitative research often relies on numeric

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[68] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 42.
[69] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 40.
[70] Lefebvre, *The production of space*; translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, p. 42.
[71] Jackson, Ronald L, Drummond, Darlene K, and Camara, Sakile, What is qualitative research?, *Qualitative research reports in communication,* vol. 8, no. 1, 2007: 21-28. https://doi.org/10.1080/17459430701617879, 2007, p. 23.

data.[72] The choice of qualitative method is based on the purpose of this thesis, to understand the role of space in the case studied. To get as deep an understanding as possible, a qualitative method is most suitable as it allows me to study meaning and symbols in texts.

3.2.2 Basic Content Analysis

Basic content analysis is widely applied in qualitative research, as it can be used in different variations. The purpose of content analysis can be to discover, explore and describe things such as thoughts and behaviours by interpretation of a text. This interpretation can differ in focus, weather it is the sender of the message, the message itself or the audience of the message that is subject to interpretation. [73] Robert Philip Weber lists some of the advantages with content analysis, among these one I find very relevant to my study: "[…] culture indicators can be used to assess quantitatively the relationships among economic, social, political, and cultural change."[74] Weber further states that content analysis is not a simple method with one correct way of being conducted. The one who applies the method must self judge what tools are most appropriate.[75]

3.2.3 Interpretive Content Analysis

Interpretive content analysis is one form for content analysis. This method is useful for going beyond the descriptive factors in a text to get a deeper understanding of the meanings of the content.[76] If basic content analysis can answer questions like 'what' and 'how', the interpretive method makes it possible to ask questions of 'why', 'for whom' and 'to what effect'. This enables the researcher to explore the circumstances as well as the consequences of the communication. It does not mean that the text itself is forgotten, the explicit content is being analysed while interpretations about it is being made. [77] One

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[72] Jackson, Drummond, and Camara, What is qualitative research?, p. 22.
[73] Weber, Robert Philip, Introduction in *Basic content analysis*, Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, Inc, 2011. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412983488, p. 2.
[74] Weber, Introduction in *Basic content analysis*, p. 3.
[75] Weber, Introduction in *Basic content analysis*, p. 5.
[76] Drisko, James W. & Maschi, Tina,, *Interpretive Content Analysis*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2015. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190215491.003.0003 p. 3.
[77] Drisko, James W. & Maschi, Tina,, *Basic Content analysis*, New York, Oxford University Press,

advantage with this method, is it enables drawing conclusions form the text, such as intentions, needs and potential actions. Drisko and Maschi uses the historic example of when interpretive content analysis was used in World War II. By looking into propaganda and actions of the enemy, conclusions about their upcoming behaviour could be made.[78]

Valid evidence and empirical data need to constitute a strong ground in the interpretive content analysis.[79] The method applies a variation of data reduction through *connotative codes*, which are categories based on themes and are identified in the text through symbolic meaning of a phrase or passage. This gives the researcher freer hands, but they also need to make sure the codes are clear to the reader. Therefore, it might be necessary that these are explained, especially if they are based on particular knowledge of the researcher or of the context of the study.[80]

The categories that make up the connotative codes in this study, are those I refer to as *Problems*, *Aims* and *Means*. The *problem*s-category is used to identify the sections in my primary material where the problem is described or referred to. As the 'ghetto-initiative' was introduced as a solution, the *problems* constitute the issues that the 'ghetto-initiative' was created to counteract. The *aims* are the objectives that the state is hoping to reach, through implementation of the *means*, which represents the measures that are to be taken for solving the *problems*.

Self-reflection is always important when conducting a scientific study, irrespective of the method used. Working with interpretive content analysis, the self-reflection is vital, as you oversee the analytical decisions and are driver of the analysis.[81] To avoid any arbitrary elements in my analysis, my approach is to stay close to the elements of the method throughout the study.

3.2.4 Trialectic of Space

2015. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190215491.003.0002, p. 2.
[78] Drisko, *Interpretive Content Analysis*, p. 8.
[79] Drisko, *Interpretive Content Analysis*, p. 3.
[80] Drisko, *Interpretive Content Analysis*, p. 14.
[81] Drisko, *Interpretive Content Analysis*, p. 18.

Theory and method can be clearly distinct from each other, in other cases, as in this one, the border is fuzzier. In this study, Lefebvre's theory of trialectic of space is used as an analytical tool applied to the primary material. This means that the theory overlaps onto and becomes part of the method. Particularly since one aspect of Lefebvre's theory, *the conceived,* includes the discourse component.

Norman Fairclough defines discourse as: "use of language seen as a form of social practice" and discourse analysis as "analysis of how texts work within sociocultural practice".[82] He stresses how this type of analysis need to focus on all levels of a text, not simply what the text says but the way it says it, what words are used and in what societal context.[83] Discourse analysis is not the main method used in this thesis, as it would not be suitable for the purpose or the question in the study and interpretive content analysis allows me to focus more on the content of the text and less on how that content is being presented. With this said, features of discourse analysis do occur, as, in line with Lefebvre's, space has a discourse which need to be analysed. Nonetheless, it could be interesting doing a discourse analysis on the primary material, with another focal point than the one for this study.

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[82] Fairclough, Norman, Critical discourse analysis, *How to analyse talk in institutional settings: A casebook of methods,* New York, Longman Publishing, 1995, p. 7.
[83] Fairclough, Critical discourse analysis, p. 7.

4   Analysis

In the following section the primary material for this study is analysed. The material is categorized by the connotative codes *Problems*, *Aims* and *Means* and analysed through Lefebvre's theory the *perceived-conceived-lived-triad*. In the first section the Danish government's paper "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos By 2030" is examined, followed by the master plan of Mjølnerparken produced by Bo-Vita housing association. First the paragraph translated by me is presented, followed by the analysis.

4.1   "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos By 2030"

4.1.1 Problems

The first three excerpt presents the state's three main points they claim have contributed to the situation in the areas on the 'ghetto-list'. There are analysed one by one.

> Firstly: The immigrant alone has the major responsibility for learning Danish, getting a job, becoming part of the community, to integrate in their new home country. Too few have taken the opportunities Denmark offers, even though Denmark is a society of security and freedom with free education and good opportunities for work.[84]

The problem expressed in this quote is that the individuals coming to Denmark have not done enough to actively be integrated in society. The state is responsible for creating the opportunities for integration and the individual is responsible for taking advantage of the these. The state takes on a passive role, they create the means needed for successful integration and it is then up to the individual to act. A relevant question here would be to

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[84] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 5.

ask: for whom is the society secure, free, and filled with opportunities and education and work?

> Secondly: Our society has for too long not made the necessary demands. Expectations of refugees and immigrants coming to Denmark have been too low. Therefore, many immigrants have ended up in lasting unemployment.[85]

There is a division of us and them, where 'we' are the society, and 'they' are the individuals coming to Denmark and not contributing to 'our' society. Here the question of responsibility shifts a bit, as it is not only the state who is responsible for not making the necessary demands, but the whole society needs to be more active and see to it that integration does not become a choice up to the individual. This reinforces the main points in the government's initiative of need for firmer action to halt the development of more areas fulfilling the criteria to be on the 'ghetto-list'.

I would argue that reality is being extremely oversimplified, as unemployment is directly explained by lack of expectation from society. This makes it sound like individuals coming to Denmark are happy to stay unemployed if no one demands they must acquire work, when in reality there are many factors that makes it difficult to find a job in a new country. The state is shying away from their responsibility, by not articulating this.

> Thirdly: For decades, too many refugees and reunited family members, who have not been integrated into society, have been allowed into Denmark. They have been permitted to be lumped together in ghetto-areas, with lack of contact to surrounding communities.[86]

There are two problems presented here, first, that too many refugees and family members have been allowed into Denmark, and second, that they have settled in closed off neighbourhoods. It is seen as a problem that people coming to Denmark have been allowed to choose their own site of residence. The state wants to restrict this freedom, which is in direct violation to the freedom to determine where to live, included in the right to adequate housing. That they have been permitted to reside freely and chosen to do so

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[85] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 5.
[86] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 5.

with family or people in similar situations as themselves, has given rise to the state's 'ghetto-initiative'. That the state has been respecting their human right to housing, and not interfered with their freedom, is here presented as an issue and a wrong.

Here is where space is introduced as a contributing factor to the problem. The message is that 'ghetto-areas' are where passive immigrants settles, happily living life not being a part of the rest of society. This is an example of how knowledge about the space is produced, by it being conceived and loaded with discourse. Even though the existing areas referred to have their architectural design already, the government is part of affecting the meaning the space has. The usage of the expression 'lumped together' can be seen as what Lefebvre talks about as a verbal sign, where an image of the area as cramped and closed off is created. One can imagine entering these neighbourhoods, after having read this description or something similar to it, and subconsciously prescribing this meaning to the dwellings. A relevant question is how this shapes the image of the residents in these areas?

> Almost half a million of the Danish population, 8,5%, consist of non-western immigrants. Many of them do well, but too many do not partake actively in society, and as such a parallel society is created, where non-western immigrants lack connection to the rest of society, since they are without employment and education, and do not speak good enough Danish.[87]

In this paragraph, the people of non-western descent are constructed as a problem. There is a division happening in two steps, first the identification of 'non-western immigrant', then splitting up those who contributes and therefore classify as 'good' and those are who do not participate in society and are therefore a *problem*. The blame for lacking in employment, education, and language, i.e integration, is being put on the immigrants themselves. The idea behind this argument is that you need to contribute to society to be accepted into it, there is a social welfare contract that entails both sides holding up their end.

This situation with lacking integration leads to the ultimate *problem*, the creation of the 'parallel society'. This term is used by the government when describing the areas that

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[87] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 4.

classify as 'ghettos'. The logic is that individuals arriving in Denmark are not connected to the main society, as they do not actively participate in it, leading to the creation of a 'parallel society' where other newly arrived individuals choose to settle and not be integrated, and thus a vicious circle is created. What becomes relevant here is how the state articulates the problem. They do not mention their own role in contributing to this situation. Instead, their role is solving the problem, in which they had no part in creating.

The 'parallel society' is a term with many layers, where space is central. Applying the spatial triad onto it, we find that the 'parallel society' does have both a physical, mental, and lived experience layer. The perceived referring to the built environment, the buildings which constitute the residential areas. A 'parallel society' in spatial terms symbolizes an area physically located in the main city, but that is at the same time closed off from it, by bricks and walls. The conceived is the discourse the areas are coated in, here the design behind the areas are relevant. The initial design for the social housing areas did not bear the same meaning as the areas do today, initially it was the symbol for modernism, prosperity, and equality – the ideology of that physical space was different. Now, the same design has taken on another meaning, because of the resident's ethnicity and social status the 'ghetto-listed' areas are described as 'parallel societies'.

The lived experience represents the aspect of living in, and belonging to, a 'parallel society'. Here is where the perceived aspect, the physical seclusion, and the conceived, the discourse about the area, come together and form the lived experience. Following the government's rationale, living in a 'parallel society' means not having employment, education, not engaging with the Danish language and culture, and lacking intent to do so. The 'parallel society' is created through these factors and takes physical form in the areas which the government call 'ghettos', which in turn help to sustain this state.

> Social control is more common among people with non-western descent. 5 out of 10 young women with non-western descent feel limited by her family when it comes to choosing a partner.[88]

> A group of citizens who are neglecting Danish norms and values, where women are of lesser worth than men, where social control and lack of equality limits

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[88] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 5.

development for the individual. It is a threat to our modern society, when liberty, democracy, equality and tolerance are not accepted as basic values. As well as when rights and duties are not being followed.[89]

The problem posed in this section is that social control and lack of gender equality is a cultural trait of 'non-western immigrants' and will increase as immigration does. Since the government argues social control is more common among people with non-western descent, and these are the ones inhabiting the targeted areas, this is portrayed as being a part of the area's everyday life. By not partaking in the Danish society, these cultural traits will remain and grow bigger which poses a problem as it goes against Danish societal norms and values. The lived experience of the residential areas is here described. Space is not mentioned, but I would argue that space is implied, as the residents of the areas are here being referred to.

Here is one of the few times 'rights' and 'duties' are explicitly mentioned in the document. It is not clear what, or whose, rights or duties are implied. My interpretation is that they are not referring to the duties they as a state have to ensure rights for their citizens. Are they implying that this 'group' is not respecting other Danish citizens' rights? And are duties referring to the social contract, where citizens have duties against the society and the state, in order to gain rights? As this is not further defined in the text, it can only be speculations on my part.

4.1.2 Aims

We have the ambitious goal that there should be no more ghettos in Denmark by 2030. All ghettos should be gone. All of them.[90]

This is what the initiative was created for. It brings up an interesting aspect of what the government initiative is, a categorization with criteria, resulting in more residential areas being classified as 'ghettos', acting as a filter to see what areas are to be demolished and split up. But it is also a tool to target specific areas they wish to dismantle.

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[89] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 5.
[90] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 7.

A cohesive Denmark, built on democratic values such as freedom and rule of law, equality and liberalism, tolerance, and gender equality. Where everyone actively partakes.[91]

Here is one of the ultimate goals presented, the ideal society the government wishes to accomplish through the initiative. The indication is that these values are not respected in the areas on the list. It is then ironic how the state claims to promote freedom, as the initiative violates freedoms for the targeted citizens, and equality, as the entire initiative is built on discriminative factors. This makes it again relevant to ask the question of who are intended, who is it that deserves to live in such a great society. Compared to the aim of the social housing projects, some of the same words are used to describes the aim of the 'ghetto-initiative', such as equality. A significant difference, however, is the political aim of liberalism, which back then was social democracy.

The government wishes to prevent and dismantle parallel societies. We want to stop the development of where those living in a parallel society do not met the ordinary Denmark. And where we some places see a behaviour which contradicts the rights, obligations, and democratic liberal values of freedom that our society is built on.[92]

The aim here is to prevent 'parallel societies', while dismantling them is the mean, therefore I will be addressing also means in this section. From a spatial perspective, dismantling 'parallel societies' can refer both to the perceived, physical environment, as well as the lived, the social. It combines the demolishing and remodelling of the physical environment with strategies for integrating the residents into the greater society. The great paradox in this section, is how rights, obligations, and democracy are emphasized as important pillars in society, meanwhile the entire 'ghetto-bill' is a threat to democracy and equality, as it contains laws making it possible to discriminate individuals based on ethnicity, income and educational level.

We owe it to all Danish children and youth that they become part of Denmark's future. They should learn proper Danish and attain skills necessary to have a good foundation in the educational system and later in the job market.[93]

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[91] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 4.
[92] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 7.
[93] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 8.

This aim addresses the vison of the future and its inhabitants. This quote is interesting as it addresses all Danish children and youth, those who need to learn the language i.e those not born in Denmark or to parents who are not Danish. They are more included than the adults and as it is stated that "we owe it all to danish children and youth", this entails that the state has an obligation towards them. In contrast to other quotes, there is no division of people, one could read this as meaning all children, including those born by Danish parents.

4.1.3 Means

There are 22 initiatives included in the government plan out of which I have chosen those most relevant to the theme of human rights and spatiality.

> To the government, it is important that we do not repeat prior mistakes. We operate without prejudice. We are willing to put new tools to work to get at the parallel communities. […] We believe this can succeed. There have been ghetto plans in the past, but with this strategy we want to also target the citizen-oriented proposals, so the initiatives will only apply to the areas and the citizens with the greatest challenges. We do not want to limit the many, to get at the few.[94]

In this section, the state takes on a more active role as those who are 'cleaning up the mess' from former governments, by using new strategies. This strategy is based on initiatives which directly targets specific areas and citizens. By not applying this to the whole of society, the state seeks to avoid 'punishing 'those they believe have done nothing wrong. Meanwhile, these initiatives are limiting to all the residents in the targeted areas, irrespective of how they behave. It is therefore very telling, when the state claims they are not limiting the many, who is being prioritized. Creating an initiative that will affect every resident in the area seems to mean that everyone living there is in one or another way guilty of something. This brings to mind Seemann's *spatialized citizenship*, where one's place of residence affects their level of citizenship.

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[94] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 7.

The division of the many and the few enforces polarization in society, where the majority can be thankful to their government for not being affected by the new laws. The majority in society is portrayed as the law-obeying citizens, who have not done anything wrong and therefore deserves not to be targeted. It is noteworthy that in the same paragraph that mentions dividing groups of people based on their area of residence, it is also stated that the government is openminded and without prejudice. As they are operating on basis of factors that to them are true and undeniable, such as unemployment and criminality rates, they do not regard themselves as prejudiced. It is hard to grasp how a state can argue for and justify dividing groups of people based on ethnicity and at the same time claim to be free of prejudices. In fact, what they are doing is contributing to residents in the area being even more stigmatized, by the discourse of the area.

Furthermore, space is central here as to this whole initiative. This becomes extra apparent here as it is only those certain geographic locations that are subject to the initiative. By looking at it from a spatiality perspective, how does this targeting affect the space? The border of the perceived space is enhanced, even if the physical space is not altered, because the space is conceived by these new provisions. It becomes clear to the individual, when an area classified as a 'ghetto' begins and ends, as the specific geographic focus is a main factor. The notion that a specific area is challenged and that there are different rules applying to the residents of that area, will inevitably, I argue, affect the perception of it.

> To feel unsafe should not be a natural thing in the at-risk areas, so that citizens who are contributing actively and positively to society are scared away. We shall be tough and consistent towards the criminals in the at-risk neighbourhoods. We create the possibility for harder punishment for criminal activities in particularly strained areas – tougher zones of punishment. […] We make it easier to punish residents, who commit crimes in and around their at-risk neighbourhood – and harder for criminals to move in.[95]

This initiative has gained much attention in the debate, and it is not hard to understand why. The mean is to introduce the possibility for receiving a harder punishment if the

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[95] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 8.

crime is committed inside on of these zones, and making it harder for individuals with prior convictions to move in. This initiative, like many in the government's plan, deserves to be scrutinized from a human rights perspective in its own study.

Again, the aspect of space becomes interesting here. The tougher zone of punishment is an invisible factor which affects the areas perceived, conceived and lived experience in an extreme way. It is not something you can see and touch, meaning that the perceived area is not altered, but the space is still affected. Knowing that you risk a higher punishment if committing a crime inside the area, is a reminder of the zone's existence. This will inevitably have effect on the lived experience, as the theme of criminality becomes a trait of the area. The discourse of this space clearly states how the government views these residents, as they are in fact not equal before the law. The area is also conceived as one where active and contributing citizens are scared off because of criminality.

This initiative represents a main idea in the government's initiative, to make changes within the borders of these areas and prevent things from happening inside them. A relevant question to ask then is where does the criminality go? It might leave these zones, but it does not erase the crime, it will likely take place somewhere else. The idea is to spread out the 'problem', to prevent criminal individuals to influence each other by controlling who has the right so settle in the area. This is yet another factor contradicting the right to housing and choosing your own residence, as individuals with prior convictions will not have equal access to the areas.

> It will take massive effort to remake these challenged areas into ordinary areas. By sales of existing dwellings and goal-oriented demolishing, among other measures. As well as construction of new private housing.[96]

Transforming the areas into 'ordinary areas' is to be done by demolishing and remodelling of the buildings and by changing the type of housing the area will consist of. The ideal area is one with a mixed population and more private housing. Since there exists no initiatives to mix up the population in other areas of Denmark, where residents with

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[96] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 7.

Danish descent makes up almost 100 percent, it becomes again clear what group in society is conceived as a problem. The main goal is not to attain mixed population areas, but to make sure to not have areas with most residents being of non-western descent.

The extreme measures of demolition and sales of buildings are justified by the discourse conceiving the space as being in such bad shape that there is need for this massive effort to attain change. Here, the perceived space is subject to alteration. The logic is that when the perceived space is changed, the population in them are as well. The state uses the physical space as a tool to create a base for this ideal area, to control who can live there.

The governments three main initiatives regarding the change of physical environment in 'ghetto-listed' areas are:

> Physically changed residential areas
> New possibilities for full dismantlement of the most vulnerable ghetto-areas.
> Possibility to cancel tenants by sales of subsidised residences in at-risk residential areas.[97]

Some areas are subject to changes while the areas that have been on the list longer and/or fulfils enough requirements will also face demolishing and evictions. The first point is solely about the perceived space - it is neutral. The second point refers to the physical environment, as well as the lived experience. The government's goal is not simply to tear down buildings, but to be rid of 'parallel societies'. It is not a complicated logic: to be rid of a certain type of resident in an area, you demolish their home. The last point is also central to changing the physical space and is elaborated on further down.

> The government wants to tackle ghetto-areas that has a large concentration of public housing and tenants living on passive income.[98]

Subsidised residences often entail tenants living on 'passive' income, meaning they are not contributing to society through employment but are living on the state's resources. This is the kind of resident the state wants to reduce in these areas, hence this initiative.

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[97] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 11.
[98] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 11.

Going back to the birth of the social housing project, the subsidised housing was meant to help people find good housing that they could afford, and now the 'ghetto-initiative' is basically doing the opposite of that as it aims to reduce the number of public housing and the tenants living there. I would argue this classifies as forced eviction and arbitrary destruction on one's home, which again is violating the right to housing.

Public housing is a type of residence that has connotations attached to it, as is made clear in this paragraph. The space is loaded with meaning, as it reveals facts about the person residing in it. The government makes it clear that these types of dwellings are not desirable to create a successful neighbourhood.

> For some ghetto-areas the challenges with parallel societies, criminality and insecurity are so massive, that from both a practical and an economical perspective, the most appropriate move is to eliminate the ghetto-area and start from scratch.[99]

This is where the master plan is introduced, as comprehensive strategies aiming to achieve permanent change in the areas classified as 'severe ghettos'. These contain plans for change in the physical environment, specifically targeted toward the problems in the areas.[100] The perceived space is prescribed an important role and an effective tool for achieving change.

These areas are so challenged that it is best for everyone they be eliminated, which brings up the question for whom it is practical and economic. It certainly is not for the current residents in the 'ghetto-areas'. The discourse of the space is riddled with stigmatizing language. The perceived space is loaded with the value of being problematic, insecure, and broken beyond fixing, and should therefore be torn down. The argument is that it is not economically viable to not interfere in these neighbourhoods and therefore drastic measures are called for.

> The elimination will either happen through complete sale and/or demolition of the area. The residents will be resettled, and thereby a city planning project will be initiated, which aims to re-establish and develop the area into an attractive

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[99] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 14.
[100] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 11.

neighbourhood with a mixed population, that is integrated with the surrounding community. The individual resident will thereby be given the opportunity to be allocated new housing, where conditions for the individual to be socially integrated are better.[101]

The values and characteristics when describing the new area that will come to be after demolishing the existing ones, clearly differ from the description of the current areas on the 'ghetto-list'. The new neighbourhoods that are developed, are not for the current residents. These are forced to move, to make room for the new population, those who will make the areas into attractive and integrated neighbourhoods with a mixed population. This description is connected to the new kind of population that will move in, the people the government wishes to see. The current residents are being punished for not integrating well enough, by having their home taken away from them and being resettled in more mixed areas.

4.2　　Bo-Vita's Master plan for Mjølnerparken

The following documents are produced by Bo-Vita. They are the kind of organization that needs to implement measures demanded in the 'ghetto-initiative', as they otherwise risk having their job overtaken by the state. This section analyses the *Aims* and the *Means*.

4.2.1 Aims

The plan is divided into 9 tracks, all pointing in the same direction towards renovating and developing Mjølnerparken to create better housing, greater sense of security and better connection with Nørrebro.[102]
[…]
2. Safe and improved communal areas.[103]

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[101] Regeringen, Ét danmark uden parallelsamfund. Ingen ghettoer i 2030, p. 14.
[102] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan, BO-VITA administreret af BO-VEST.
https://mjolnerparken.dk/om-projektet/om-projektet-2/ (accessed 2021-05-11).
[103] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.

The existing communal areas are conceived as not being safe enough. Changing the perceived space will improve the lived experience for the residents focusing on enhancing safety in line with the government's wish. This will be the case once the areas have been renovated, and the population mixed up and many of the current residents are gone. The safety will not be enhanced for all current residents, but for those labelled as positive contributors to society.

> 7. New resident spaces –
> Spaces will be installed on Hothers Plads 2, for the activities necessary for supporting neighbourhood community, unison, and security.[104]

Applying the spatial triad-perspective, the perceived space is prescribed meaning, as it is in this space that the lived experience will take place. The design is done with the intention of creating a place that facilitates community, physical meetings between neighbours, and a sense of security. The perceived space is prescribed an important role in increasing safety and sense of community, as such the space is loaded with the value of safety. This resembles the thought behind the social housing project, where communal areas were said to strengthen the sense of community in the neighbourhood.

> Increased activity in our local environment will contribute to better security. Our closed courtyards, the dividing of cellars and general increase of safety on doors and windows helps create better sense of security.[105]

The lived experience and everyday life will be improved once the perceived space is altered. Something to note here, is that security will be reached by limiting access to spaces. At the same time as they wish to create better connection with the surrounding neighbourhood, they also plan to close of spaces and make them unavailable for those who are not residents in the area. The increased safety on doors and windows communicates that there are threats from the outside the residents need to be protected from. Security will be enhanced both from more activity in the neighbourhood, as well as protection from activity in the area. The perceived spaces, the dwellings, operates as safe spaces to lock yourself in.

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[104] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.
[105] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.

4.2.2 Means

Mjølnerparken has obtained a physical master plan, and it is an ambitious plan that the residents have adopted.[106]

This labels the residents as central actors. The housing associations in Denmark are democratic and there needs to be a consensus between the members in order for initiatives to pass. But because of the overriding factor that the state can intervene and overtake buildings if they fail, one can discuss the level of democracy really imbedded in this process.

> All apartments are to have a new kitchen, bathroom, windows, and the balconies will get new facades. It will be possible to personally influence the arrangement of kitchen and bathroom, as well as to make acquisitions, if one for example wishes to have their apartment painted.[107]

It is here accounted for how the perceived space will change in the apartments that are to be renovated. Compared to the construction of social housing projects, where all apartments aimed to look the same, this is different in Mjølnerparken as the residents can influence the design. What becomes clear, is that the ideal is no longer unity, as in the social housing projects, but individuality. Furthermore, it goes against the social democratic values of equality, as the possibility to make upgrades is available only to those who has the resources for it. In other words, the economic divides will be apparent in the physical environment, the facades and walls will carry meaning, they will reveal ideals and ideas behind the space. This reveals the state's presence in space, in line with how Lefebvre's argues that political power is central part in physical environment.

> Mjølnerparken will become an active space, where all street level apartments along Mimersparken will be rebuilt into new shops. With the new road between Mimersgade and Tagensvej, Metro cityringen and Nørrebro station and the newly built Nordbro, Mjølnerparken is a perfect place for grocery stores, restaurants, cafés, retail shops and services.[108]

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[106] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.
[107] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.
[108] Bo-Vita, Den fysiske helhedsplan.

This is a big change in the perceived environment. By introducing these types of commercial spaces, the entire area will most likely see a complete shift in character going from residences to commercial spaces.

> The facade will come alive by breaking the theme of red bricks that divides the apartments and changing it for other materials, colours and textures such as charcoal grey felting, green planting on walls, facade panels etc.[109]

That the façade will come alive implies it is not alive the way it is currently. The space will be conceived in a different way, by going from the design of monochrome walls, to introducing a mix of colours and textures. By making the façade come alive, the area as a whole will come alive, and impact the lived experience.

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[109] Bo-Vita, Renovering af Mjølnerparken, BO-VITA administreret af BO-VEST https://mjolnerparken.dk/om-projektet/renovering-af-mjoelnerparken/ (accessed 2021-05-11).

5   Results and Discussion

In this section the results of the analysis are presented. This is followed by a discussion of issues that have come up during the analysis.

5.1   Results

The study was conducted with the following question:

What meaning is ascribed to physical space in the Danish government's case "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos by 2030" and the master plan for Mjølnerparken, and what can be revealed by applying a human rights perspective?

To answer this question, the following section first addresses the role of space, second the state's attitude towards human rights obligations in the targeted areas and lastly by presenting the results of these two perspectives together.

The state ascribes the physical space the role of both a contributing factor to the problems in the targeted areas, as well as being part of the solution to them. Architectural factors are emphasised to be problematic: the buildings are too alike, the area is closed off from the neighbouring communities, and there is a big concentration of public subsidised housing. This is to be solved by creating a mixture of design and type of housing, to mix up the population. Changes to the perceived space are argued to improve life for the residents, resembling ideas in the plans for the post World War II social housing projects. As the term *safe* is being generously used in the 2018 Mjølnerparken's master plan, it is clear that the plans for the change of the physical environment are meant to strengthen the safety. Additionally, a mixture of colours and textures on the new building will lead to a more living space.

Deconstructing space reveals how values and imagery in the government's plan, has part in affecting how the physical areas are conceived. 'Ghettos' and 'parallel societies', are not only mental or physical states but a combination which has serious consequences for those living 'in' them. The terms facilitate the state's neglection of residents, efficiently distancing themselves from them and thereby their obligations toward them. This categorization contributes also to creating stricter mental borders to the area, by imposing rules that only applies to that specific area.

The spatial perspective help to explain the factors that affect someone's chance of integration into society, as it reveals the synergy of the physical and the mental aspects of space, resulting in the lived experience. This opens for a much-needed discussion on who is responsible for this state. Individuals labelled as 'immigrants' are valued on basis of their level of integration to society as the state claim they have done their part by creating conditions for integration and from there, the responsibility for activating them is on the individual. The state sees themselves living up to their obligations, and have always done so, for *their* people. By using words such as rights and obligations, freedom and democracy in a bill that entail the opposite of that to a certain group in society, makes it clear that all citizens are not equal in the eyes of the state. The people that are prioritized are not the current residents, but those who are coming after to reside in the areas, be that the current residents outside the 'ghetto-areas', or a future generation.

The use of language such as rights, obligations, exists in the text and when it does Denmark and the Danish society is portrayed as the ideal society to which immigration poses a threat. The state does not shy away from openly referring to the freedoms they want to restrict, like choosing place of residence. With the new initiative, the state is 'cleaning up mistakes' from prior governments and they are proud to announce the new strategy entails targeted initiatives, both for citizens and areas. It can therefore be concluded that the state is not taking equal responsibility for all its citizens. They do not feel the same obligations to fulfil rights and respect freedoms for the people in 'ghetto areas', which they label as 'non-western immigrants', as they do for those viewed as 'regular' Danish citizens. They impose initiatives affecting those who 'deserve' it, while not affecting the 'innocent'. Creating a division between ordinary citizens and the people in the 'ghettos', facilitates not feeling responsible for them.

Taking a human rights perspective to spatiality in this case has helped discover the ideological values prescribed to the plans for the physical environment and how it has shifted through history. Social democracy was the value behind the housing projects following World War II, striving for unity in the design, in the same way that liberalism influences the government's 2018 initiative, where the goal is a mixed type of housing. The same areas earlier loaded with values of equality and prosperity are today, due to the ethnicity of who resides in them, a symbol for the opposite. They have instead become a problem that the state argues needs fixing through changing the physical environment. The state's power is clearly present, and it can be revealed through deconstructing the physical space.

5.2   Discussion

This study has shined a light on more questions and topics to discuss than could ever fit into this section. What follows is a discussion of the most prominent and relevant issues that have come up along the way, followed by a section reflecting on the past and future scenarios.

5.2.1 Main Issues Identified

What is the chicken and what is the egg in his case, depends on whose narrative you subscribe to. According to the Danish government, the immigrants are to blame for lacking integration, and thereby also the establishment of 'parallel societies', which are now the target for reconstruction. But, if you come to Denmark as an immigrant, and settle in one of the residential areas that are classified as a 'ghetto', what reality is it that you are being introduced to? Perhaps having low chance of finding a job, not because you are of another ethnicity, but because your address belongs to a stigmatized area with a reputation of being criminal and poor. The state argues they have fulfilled their obligations by providing the prerequisites needed for successful integration, that they have upheld their part of the bargain in the social welfare contract. While in fact, the state is responsible for creating, or reinforcing lack of integration, as their initiative contributes

to further stigmatizing of the areas they choose to call 'ghettos'. This demonstrates the paradox, and the illogical reasoning, the whole initiative bears the stamp of.

An essential problem with the term 'parallel society' is how it entails existing outside the 'regular' society. This brings the questions of who has the obligation to uphold human rights in a 'parallel society'? What rules are there this community? As the state does not feel the people in 'parallel societies' have fulfilled their end of the social contract, they consequently do not deserve to have their rights respected. Therefore, claiming the right to housing for a group of people the state does not feel obligated towards, will not be particularly efficient.

The government's 'ghetto-initiative' is a system created by themselves, for themselves, to drive their agenda through. The state decides the criteria for being classified as 'ghetto', which are based on discriminatory factors such as ethnicity, social and economic class, effectively filtering out what areas are to be demolished and remodelled. This gives rise to suspicion of the state's agenda, that they are arbitrarily using their power as a state, hiding behind arguments about areas and physical space, to get at a specific group of people in society. Their actions are justified through a legal system they themselves have installed. What is their underlying driving force for this initiative? Are there any economic incentives, where they profit from introducing more private owned buildings and commercial streets? This makes it even more relevant to be sceptical, as the more areas that are placed on the 'ghetto-list', result in more sales of residences, resulting in more profit for the state. Also apparent in this case is the danger in overemphasizing the role of space, and the consequences it has for life, as the government have done in some respect.

The rudimentary problem with this initiative is how it was created by a government that does not feel equally responsible for all its citizens, where some group's rights are openly prioritized over other's. A central question is therefore: Can you justifiably violate some human rights to advance the realization of others? Seeing human rights as indivisible, this is not possible. But what if realization of someone's rights cannot be secured without violation of someone else's? In this case, the current resident's rights are being violated in favour for the people settling in the areas in the future, they are the ones who get to

reap the benefits. Could this argument possibly strengthen the government's case? This is a topic worthy of its own discussion.

5.2.2 Historic Perspective and Future Prospects

The state wants to remove the areas because that will remove the identified problems which are the residents and the harms they create. But what will happen with these residents, where will they go and what does the future hold for them? This initiative lacks long-term perspective for the residents occupying the areas today. The long-term perspective is, as much else in this case, in favour of the 'regular citizen' outside the 'ghetto'. This brings up also the question of how successful targeted initiatives for specific physical areas are. Take the social housing projects, which also focused on building a specific area where life and people were supposed to thrive and be happy. Perhaps these targeted policies are bound to fail, as a successful society need to include a universal perspective, where all citizens are included, involved, and equally valued by its state.

There is uncertainty for what will happen once architectural plans meet the reality, which this study has helped shine light on. What impact these policies really have on the lives of people, and to what extent such plans will become modified when they meet reality, and as time passes. As have been made clear by now, the values and ideas put into the social housing projects in post-World War II Denmark, contrasts with the values generally associated with the same areas today. This opens for reflection on how the ideas influencing the remodelling of the targeted areas will resonate when they are done, as well as 50 years from now. Will the ideals have shifted again to where the ultimate dwellings are not individualistic? Will the discrimination built into the initiative that created the buildings be all we can think about? Or will that be forgotten if the goal of creating 'attractive' and 'safe' areas is achieved?

6 Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to study the physical space and building environment in relation to human rights in the Danish 'ghetto-case', by posing the following question:

What meaning is ascribed to physical space in the Danish government's case "A Denmark Without Parallel Societies – No Ghettos by 2030" and the master plan for Mjølnerparken, and what can be revealed by applying a human rights perspective?

By using Henri Lefebvre's analytical tools for deconstructing space, values and ideas of the government's the plan and of the master plan for Mjølnerparken has been identified. It has become clear that space is not neutral and, in some cases, like this one, there is much to be unravelled about the underlying factors. The Danish government identifies lacking integration, due to 'passive immigrants' and insufficient demands from former governments, as a main *problem* resulting in the creation and sustaining of 'parallel societies'. The individuals seen as not being 'Danish' enough are blamed for the *problems* the state's initiative aims to tackle, as well as punished by it. To fulfil the *aim* of not having any areas be classified as 'ghettos' by 2030, the initiative legalises sales and destruction of the buildings in the targeted areas listed as 'severe ghettos'. The overall *aim* is a cohesive society with functioning integration and flourishing neighbourhoods. Furthermore, Bo-Vita's master plan indicates that the lived experience in the areas will be transformed into safer neighbourhoods by alteration of the physical environment, through building new types of houses with individualistic design.

A human rights perspective on space in the Danish 'ghetto-case' has made clear that the Danish state does not feel equally responsible for all citizens. The rights of the residents in areas listed as 'ghettos' seem easily disregarded, such as the right to adequate housing which entails the freedom to choose place of residence. This lands in the presumption that the state is prioritizing some citizens' rights over others.

Conclusively, deconstructing space reveals the political power embedded in the physical environment of estates. It can reveal how strengthening of physical and mental borders can emphasize the division between groups in society and be used as a tool to target minorities. The government's 'ghetto-case' is an extreme initiative, that calls for continuous critical scrutiny, as the Danish state justifies human rights violations through irrational arguments and discriminatory practices.

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