FAITH IN POLICING:
THE CO-PRODUCTION OF CRIME CONTROL IN BRITAIN

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ABSTRACT

Involving faith-based organizations (FBOs) in the production of crime control has been seen as a way of increasing efficiency, promoting accountability, and improving trust and confidence in policing. In this article, which draws on qualitative research, we consider how police officers understand the role of faith in policing, engage with faith communities, and work with FBOs to mobilise crime prevention activities. We demonstrate that any effective co-production of crime control that involves faith communities and FBOs requires police officers to negotiate a number of complex and multi-faceted issues. We argue that the co-production of crime control has symbolic, moral, and technical qualities which all need to be successfully negotiated to achieve its aims.

KEY WORDS

Community, Faith, Faith-based organizations, Policing, Religion

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INTRODUCTION

Religious faith has become central to public policing in Britain. Constabularies now routinely consider and address the relationship between faith and crime in a number of different, and sometimes competing, ways. For example, officers must balance their duty to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals to have and express a faith whilst, at the same time, prevent that faith drawing people into extremism and terrorism. One of the ways in which constabularies have sought to deal with such tensions is to encourage greater interaction between police personnel and religious individuals, organizations, and communities. The principal ambition of this interaction is to facilitate the development of reciprocal relationships between constabularies and faith-based organisations (hereinafter 'FBOs') through which the co-production of effective crime control may be achieved by way of initiatives aimed at preventing crime, promoting security, and apprehending criminal suspects (Bullock, 2014). In this article we draw on qualitative data produced in a study of three English constabularies to consider how officers approach, understand, and enact the co-production of crime control in relation to religious faith.

THE RELEVANCE OF RELIGIOUS FAITH TO POLICING: A BRIEF HISTORY

In recent years, scholars have claimed that British society has undergone a process of desecularisation (Berger, 1999) and entered into a period of postsecularity (Beckford, 2012). Various explanations have been provided for this. These include the increased vocality of conservative religious organizations and pressure groups that, in the face of what they perceive as hostile cultural and political transformations, seek to exercise greater influence in law and policy-making (Johnson and Vanderbeck, 2014). The 'return' of religious faith to the centre of policy-making is apparent in British policing and can be understood as the result of a number of trends, which we examine below.

Diversity and religious faith

In the context of periodic crises in policing – characterised by accusations of police racism and mistrust between the police and minority ethnic communities (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999) – an appeal to religious faith has been one aspect of the wider equality and diversity agenda developed by constabularies in their attempt to re-establish their legitimacy. Although a focus on race and ethnicity has often served to obscure the specific place of faith within police work (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2014), constabularies have long been concerned with considering the relevance of religion to contemporary British policing. This concern can be traced back to the controversy surrounding the publication of Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* in the late 1980s, which highlighted the relevance of religious identities, motivations and feelings to the policing sphere, and to policy-making and public life more broadly (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2014: 610). Rioting in predominantly Pakistani and Bangladeshi areas in Northern English cities in 2001 drew further attention to the place of faith in the construction of British identities – at least amongst Muslims – and raised questions about the role of policing in promoting community integration and addressing marginalisation and exclusion (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2014).

Terrorism and neighbourhood policing

The most explicit way in which religious faith and policing currently intersect is in respect of counter-terrorism policy and law enforcement and, therefore, police service interest in religious faith needs to be understood within the wider context of 'securitization' (see Ericson, 2007). The threat of Islamic inspired terrorism has driven attempts to increase community resilience to violent extremism by promoting integration, democratic participation, and interfaith dialogue (HM Government, 2006; HM Government, 2009; HM Government, 2011). Whilst counter-terrorism policies have traditionally emphasised 'hard' policing tactics (such as surveillance, intelligence gathering, and the use of informants), 'soft' community policing models (which stress interaction, engagement, and partnership) have become dominant (Briggs et al 2006; Lowe and Innes, 2008; Innes and Roberts, 2008; Bettison, 2009; Spalek and Lambert, 2008; Spalek, 2010; McFadyen and Prideaux, 2011, 2014). Consequently, there is now significant crossover between the work directly undertaken, managed or directed by police personnel charged with preventing terrorism and

the work undertaken by neighbourhood officers within the context of community policing (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2014).

Police service interest in religious faith goes much wider than counter-terrorism. Following Scarman (1981), constabularies are required to consult with citizens about police strategies and promote accountability (Jones and Newburn, 2001; Bullock, 2014). A key development in this approach is that officers are now required to be sensitive to faith, responsive to the needs of faith communities, and motivate FBOs to deliver interventions aimed at controlling crime (NPIA, n.d.). Ensuring that neighbourhood policing is responsive to faith communities is seen as a key way in which 'citizen-focused' services might be oriented and, more broadly, as a mechanism for building trust and confidence in policing through the promotion of dialogue and information exchange (Innes, 2011; Bullock, 2014). However, it is apparent that current counter-terrorism policy (HM Government, 2011) and counter-terrorism policing practices influence the degree to which certain faith communities and FBOs are prepared to engage with British constabularies (Spalek, 2008 and 2010; Choudhury and Fenwick, 2011). This is relevant to understanding the nature of co-production activities between the police service and FBOs and we return to this issue below.

Religious faith and civil society

A concern with religious faith is also found in wider debates about the role of civil society in the delivery of public services (Putnam, 1995 and 2000; Wuthnow, 2004). In the USA, the role of FBOs in delivering public services emerged as a major policy debate towards the end of the twentieth century and this has since become increasingly animated (Wuthnow, 2004), especially in respect of policing (Gordon, 2003; McGarrell, Brinker and Etindi, 1999). In Britain, there have been calls from successive governments for the structures of civil society – citizens and organizations that are independent of government – to play a more active role in the provision of welfare and social services (Pratchett, 2004; Stoker, 2006; Bullock, 2014) and this has intensified since the 2008 economic crisis and the associated retrenchment of funding for state services (Bullock, 2014; Evans, 2011). FBOs have been seen as a key facet of civil society (Putnam, 1995 and 2000; Wuthnow, 2004) and their participation in policing has been viewed by British governments as a way of more effectively controlling crime as well as promoting police responsiveness and legitimacy (NPIA, n.d.). For example, the role of FBOs in providing certain policing functions has been an aspect of the 'Big Society' – a

concept that has been utilised to denote an active role for citizens, often through volunteering, in delivering services to communities (Bullock, 2014; Evans, 2011). The former Conservative Prime Minister, David Cameron, described the Community Security Trust (CST) – a volunteer organization that provides security for British Jews – as a model for British communities and an organization that epitomized the Big Society (Standpoint, 2011). Calls to bring FBOs into British policing therefore need to be understood as the result of a political and economic agenda that advocates the positioning of citizens, rather than the state, as central to the creation and delivery of public services (Pratchett, 2004; Stoker, 2006; Innes, 2011; Bullock, 2014).

CONTEXT, CONTRIBUTION AND OVERVIEW OF OUR ANALYSIS

Academic consideration of the influence of religion on British policing is, with the exception of counter-terrorism, rare (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2011 and 2014; Prideaux and McFadyen, 2013). Consequently, little is known about how officers use religious faith as an axis around which to orient or deliver services at the local level. There are activities carried out by FBOs which demand strategic and co-ordinated interaction with the police – for example, in respect of some forms of street patrolling carried out by FBOs such as the CST, Street Pastors, and Street Angels (Bullock, 2014) – and some constabularies have encouraged FBOs to develop and deliver interventions on their behalf. However, the extent to which officers identify, engage with, and motivate FBOs to deliver interventions aimed at controlling crime is far from clear. Additionally, when FBOs are motivated to work with constabularies, little is known about the implications for quality, consistency, and accountability of public services.

It is within this context that we provide an analysis of data derived from qualitative research on the role of religious faith in policing that was carried out in three English constabularies between 2015 and 2016. The research comprised 21 qualitative interviews with a mix of officers and police staff drawn from neighbourhood policing teams, counter-terrorism units, and diversity directorates, who all had some oversight of, responsibility for, and experience of working with faith groups. As 'key informants' or organizational 'proxies' (Parsons, 2008), the research participants were therefore purposively selected because of their insight into the role of religious faith in their constabularies.

Participants were asked to reflect on the nature of their interaction with faith communities and FBOs, the precise mechanisms which exist to facilitate such interaction, the extent to which the wider police family engages with issues relating to faith, and the perceived benefits and challenges of working with faith groups. The participants were not asked explicitly about their own faith and the role that this may play in operational policing, although a minority of them did discuss this. Since personal religiosity has been shown to influence day-to-day police practice (see Prideaux and McFadyen, 2013) we consider this issue, where relevant, when discussing our findings. Moreover, whilst the issue of counter-terrorism was not a specific focus of the interviews – because the primary aim of the research was to consider the relevance of religious faith to policing more broadly – participants did identify counter-terrorism policing as an influence on their engagement with some, predominantly Muslim, FBOs and, accordingly, we consider this in our analysis. All interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. Interview data were thematically analysed in light of the aims of the study and extant literature in the field. This involved a process of data familiarisation, generating codes, forming initial themes, and reviewing and refining those themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Quotations are provided to illustrate the themes generated from the analysis.

In the remainder of the article, we draw on participants' accounts to offer an insight into the role that religious faith plays within contemporary British policing. We begin with an examination of the ways in which constabularies engage with faith communities and FBOs and go on to consider how FBOs do or may carry out functions relevant to policing, either in a formal capacity on behalf of constabularies or informally through volunteer activity at the community level. We make the distinction between 'policing with faith' and 'faith as policing' in order to show the differences between police activities that are aimed at encouraging police engagement with faith communities and FBOs, for the sake of generating police-relevant information or promoting confidence, and those that involve FBOs themselves mobilising or levering resources in order to alleviate the impact of crime and disorder. The overall aim of our analysis is to show the ways in which constabularies, faith communities and FBOs currently interact, the mechanisms that shape the nature of such interaction, and the implications of this interaction for crime control.

POLICING WITH FAITH

The relevance of engagement with faith communities and FBOs to contemporary policing

Our research participants saw engagement with faith communities and FBOs as important in promoting responsive policing, crime control, and police legitimacy. In this respect, they often invoked the diversity agendas of their constabularies to talk about how faith was recognized as a dimension of communities that police officers should be alert to. Participants also talked about the challenges raised when faith communities and FBOs make specific demands on officers' time, when people of faith are subject to specific and unique forms of criminal victimisation, and when officers are required to observe specific forms of social etiquette during interaction with people of faith. However, many participants were keen to stress the importance of officers calibrating the needs of faith communities with other priorities relevant to the delivery of police services. As one officer explained:

> [T]he way faith groups are dealt with by [named constabulary] [is] the same as any other group, any other group [that] will quite often shout and say they've got a problem […] It will then be assessed against what the rest of society are saying is a problem, what crime figures are saying is a problem, what incident levels are saying is a problem. (INT4)

Therefore, within the context of competing priorities, faith is understood as one of the multiple factors that influence wider macro-level police decision-making.

Police engagement with faith communities and FBOs is seen as central to enhancing crime control and promoting police legitimacy. Acknowledging that some citizens lack confidence in the police, do not report crimes or emerging problems, and that this influences crime control, officers emphasised the need to demonstrate to faith communities 'how open we are, and that we're not what they believe we are' in order to 'keep pushing forward […] to help these people the best we can' (INT8). In recognizing that some citizens 'feel isolated' and that the 'trust element [in the police] is missing' (INT17) building trust in policing, so that those citizens 'could feel sort of much more confident […] in reporting' (INT21), was seen as important. In practical terms, this was seen to involve 'finding out what's concerning

different elements of society' in order that the police can help 'to problem solve and make communities better' (INT19). In this respect, the role of community based neighbourhood officers was seen as vital:

> Whether it's faith, whether it's local residents, whether it's pubs, clubs, they will be that frontline link passing intelligence both ways, certainly what's going on from policing perspective and also finding out what's concerning different elements of society. (INT4)

Participants argued that this form of interaction should be a continuous and central aspect of police work. As one officer explained:

> [I]n order for general policing to take place, which we take for granted, […] I would say there's a great deal of work going on behind the scenes […] to maintain that normality, that basic civil society […] I've been described before as the glue. (INT14)

This description of the interaction between police officers and faith communities as providing the 'glue' exemplifies what many participants told us. Engagement with faith communities and FBOs is seen as essential to maintaining the social relations that make it possible to deliver responsive police services, to generate police relevant information, and to enforce the criminal law. Without such interaction faith communities could become divorced from 'basic civil society' and, as a result, be beyond the reach of police services.

Structures of engagement

Interaction between the police service, faith communities and FBOs does not occur naturally or straightforwardly but needs to be orchestrated. Specifically, it depends upon police gaining access and this, in turn, requires careful negotiation of a number of factors that we consider below.

Accessing institutional spaces

Police engagement with faith communities tends to occur in institutional spaces, such as churches, mosques or synagogues. An institutional space acts as a 'proxy' for faith and is a

gateway to populaces who may otherwise be difficult to access by the police. One participant described religious spaces and the people that attend them as a 'huge resource' and a 'ready-made resource' for policing (INT7). This participant went on to explain that 'if the Chief Constable […] asks me […], "can you go out and get me 500 people that I want to speak to", I'll find it extremely difficult, whereas on a Friday I can just say OK, let's go to this mosque, open the door and there are six or 700 people' (INT7). Gaining access to faith communities via their institutional spaces usually requires that relationships between officers and particular key individuals – gatekeepers – be carefully forged. As one participant put it, 'You don't build a relationship with the community, you build a relationship with an individual. I think that's the misconception' (INT9). Gatekeepers, who may function to disseminate information, raise awareness, and overcome any suspicion or resistance that officers might encounter in a wider population, were seen as vital for facilitating engagement. As one participant stated:

> [I]f we get the right people on board, they will subsequently speak to maybe the wider community, people that maybe have language barriers, people that in the past haven't engaged with police. Instead of me going to that person, the stakeholder would intervene. (INT19)

Conversely, reliance on gatekeepers can function to narrow the pool of citizens around which engagement is oriented. As one participant noted: 'You can quite often deal with a church and the vicar and the people that work at the church, so you're engaging with them but you're not necessary engaging with the wider community that attend that venue on a regular basis' (INT10). Nonetheless, officers clearly adopt a pragmatic approach to using gatekeepers to gain access. As one participant told us: 'it is not always the people you necessarily ideally want, but nevertheless you have to start somewhere' (INT21).

A factor that influences access to institutional spaces is the level of understanding of faith among officers. For instance, the tensions, intricacies, and nuances that currently characterize Islam are unlikely to be well understood by the majority of officers (Innes, 2006; McFadyen and Prideaux, 2011) and this may affect their access to Muslim communities. One participant explained, for example, how he averted problems that would have been created by his colleagues had they attended, as they planned, an Eid Mubarak celebration to give a talk about radicalisation. Likening the plan to 'going and talking about the IRA on Christmas

Day', this officer stated: 'If they invite us to it we can go, but we shouldn't go with our size nines and start handing out leaflets about terrorism on Eid Mubarak' (INT9). The importance of understanding different faiths is not limited to matters of religious holidays, festivals, and observances. Negotiating access to a faith community can also be influenced by understanding social and cultural issues which affect that community. For instance, in describing how he used his extensive knowledge of political, economic, and cultural affairs in Pakistan to engage with the largely Muslim population of one area of his constabulary, one officer noted that 'they were really surprised I knew about some of the issues, the political parties and all the other bits and pieces' (INT12).

Participants drew particular attention to the need to understand how the social relations of faith communities are influenced by wider national politics, foreign policy and international events (see also: Briggs et al 2006; Innes, 2006; Spalek et al 2008; Spalek, 2010). As one officer noted: 'I see global events impacting on a daily basis on the streets in our district, and that's many and varied' (INT14). Or, as another officer put it:

> [S]omething happens at the other end of the world and you feel the impact of [it] here […] [I]t's not just the local stuff, but really your eyes and ears have got to be open on an international level, just see what sort of things are happening and how that is going to play out. (INT7)

However, participants drew attention to how most officers have limited awareness of geo-political factors and how they influence social relations at the local level. One participant acknowledged: 'I find it interesting, but trying to talk to some of my officers […] that just want to go nicking people, driving cars around and aren't really interested in world events so to speak, it's very hard to get them to want to buy into that' (INT12).

Participants were aware that understanding of faith, familiarity with social, economic and political contexts, and cultural sensitivity are all required if access to faith communities and FBOs is to be successfully negotiated. When these requirements are achieved they are generally achieved experientially rather than through training (see also McFadyen and Prideaux, 2011). This may be inevitable because, as one participant explained, 'if you try to cover everything, it is impossible, when you look at all the different themes out there and all the different communities […] [The] only way you find out about them is asking, asking

questions, and generally people will talk to you' (INT20). One participant emphasised the importance of equipping officers with 'universal skills', such as empathy and sympathy, in respect of gaining access to faith communities and FBOs:

> I don't think I or anyone can equip an officer to know everything under the sun in terms of culture and religion and those intricacies about that […] [W]hat I try to tell myself when I interact with people is treat people with that respect and dignity as an individual and usually that person will come along with you […] Let's equip them with that sensitivity, let's equip them with understanding empathy and sympathy that you are dealing with somebody that is reporting a crime and not everybody is a bad person and needs locking away […] it's that sort of interaction that we need to have, universal skills. (INT16)

Whilst previous research has shown that the personal faith of police officers can facilitate access to faith communities (McFadyen and Prideaux, 2011), this was not a factor stressed by our participants. One Muslim officer did argue that personal faith can be closely linked to cultural knowledge and this, in turn, might provide access to a faith community – because 'you get that extra bond with them and […] can easily connect with them' – but emphasized that 'anybody can do that kind of [engagement] role, because it's all about engaging with the community' (INT17). In this respect, participants stated that access to faith communities was determined less by the personal faith of officers and more by the relationships they form in communities. A crucial factor in building relationships capable of facilitating access is, as one officer explained in relation to engaging with a Muslim community through its institutional spaces, that they must be forged through long-term interaction:

> I didn't get fully to grips with it in [the] three years I was doing the role, but I did gain a good understanding […] from going into [and] not knowing anything about that community, to actually becoming welcomed into [the] community and having a good understanding of how to hold my own in a conversation with imams and people like that. (INT10)

'Becoming welcomed' into a faith community requires consistent and routine engagement that, as one participant stated, facilitates information exchange and intelligence gathering:

[T]he only intelligence you get is by [having] that good relationship, and if you've got that consistent relationship where you know somebody and you know their first name and you've known them for a number of years, months, it's so much easier to get something out of somebody than if you just see them and that's the first time you've seen them […] So you need that consistency to build those relationships. (INT4)

However, as we explore below, the establishment of long-term relationships, and the intelligence that may flow from them, is often compromised by the institutional organization of engagement work.

The institutional organization of engagement

Formal engagement work with faith communities and FBOs is a peripheral activity conducted by a minority of officers who are usually concentrated in specialist community and diversity teams. This institutional compartmentalisation results in the segregation of engagement work from routine police work. One consequence of this is that engagement officers may be insufficiently championed and supported in their work. For example, one participant described how, although his manager was unusually supportive, limited resources were made available to facilitate his engagement work:

He actually seems to get, seems to be one of the bosses that actually is interested. The police is brilliant at paying lip service to things to be honest with you, and he, he's really supportive of it. But the problem is, so we've got it all up and running, the very small budget to do the training, and then you're kind of thinking OK, right, what do we do now? (INT12)

Another consequence of compartmentalizing engagement work is that the majority of officers may not see engagement as relevant to policing. In this respect, one participant recalled the following conversation with a senior officer: 'it was about a year ago when a senior officer said to me, "I don't do community, I leave that to you", which I found quite shocking really' (INT11). Participants agreed that officers at all levels could be sceptical of the value and purpose of engaging with faith communities. There may be specific instances – such as engagement resulting in the acquisition of intelligence that leads to the apprehension of a criminal suspect – where officers 'absolutely […] see the value in it' (INT3). However, for

the most part, the organizational benefits of engagement with faith communities and FBOs are seen as 'woolly', 'diverse,' and 'ongoing' (INT15). Because benefits are felt over the long term and are difficult to quantify, many officers find it hard to appreciate exactly how engagement work fits into routine operational policing. Engagement work, which rests on the slow, patient build-up of relations over time, stands in contrast to other, often immediate, aspects of operational policing, such as criminal investigation and emergency response, which rest on the fast-time, action-fuelled pursuit of criminal suspects and enforcement of the criminal law. These latter activities tend to be seen by many officers as 'real' policing and, as such, are coveted by officers and rewarded by the organization (Myhill, 2006; Bullock, 2014). By contrast, engagement work can be devalued and marginalised. As one participant put it, 'there's perhaps a temptation to think the job that I do is pink and fluffy' (INT14). Or as another described:

> I don't think you could pluck any particular officer to ask them to do our job. One, it's perhaps not everyone's cup of tea, because we are not actually always fighting crime and things, but a lot of people don't see the importance of community relations. (INT11)

A final consequence of compartmentalisation described by participants is that it leaves engagement work vulnerable to the turnover of officers. As previously noted, individual understanding and personal relationships characterise engagement work and a turnover of officers can dissipate knowledge and sever connections, undermining long-term engagement. Acknowledging this, one officer stated: 'I think for policing you can't have individuals like me that are the only point of contact, it needs to be "the police", not "[me]"' (INT12). The (over) reliance on a small number of individuals that are tied into communities to carry out engagement work, and the potential for this to be disrupted by organizational change, draws attention to the fragility of engagement work, as well as to how it can become marginalised and devalued. This is compounded by wider political and economic shifts, to which we now turn.

Political and economic contexts

The commitment to resourcing police engagement activities shifts over time as policing priorities become recast in the context of wider political transformations. For instance, one

officer explained how the organizational focus on hate crime that was generated by Macpherson (1999) – a pivotal moment in the history of 'race relations' and policing in Britain (Rowe, 2007) – was displaced over time:

> When the [Macpherson] report came out, hate crime was a massive thing for the police service […] I set up a hate crime officer role in [named constabulary] and that was really big, and then that sort of died off […], as time went by, then it became domestic violence, that was really really big, and now it's child sexual exploitation that is really big. (INT12)

This officer went on to explain how the police engagement with Muslim communities that was stimulated by '9/11' had similarly 'died off'. Consequently, by the time he was assigned to a community policing role in a largely Muslim area of one constabulary, the links he assumed he would find had dissipated:

> I've been an officer on [named area] for the majority of my service so far and we had always heard […] how good the engagement and everything was over in [named area] and it was supposed to be our role model of what we should be doing, and when I arrived there [I] was completely clueless to it effectively, kind of expecting to pick up what had been done and build on it. I found that there was nothing. (INT12)

Many participants discussed how a politically motivated transformation of engagement work is currently occurring. As previously noted, much engagement work is organizationally entwined with neighbourhood policing but, as a consequence of the retrenchment that has characterised the state's response to the 2008 economic recession, neighbourhood policing is now vulnerable (see HMIC, 2013). Participants argued that the structures that sustain engagement work – dedicated officers, small beats, a focus on foot patrol, and systematic interaction with community organizations at the local level – are being dismantled. As one participant noted: 'there's not many officers out there really who have the time to engage and go to events and represent the force at things' (INT11). For participants, this may function to leave those in faith communities feeling marginalized, disengaged, and cynical about officer engagement. One participant stated: 'A lot of people will remember the last time a police officer said "yeah, I'll help you, no problem", and then didn't' (INT8). This suggests prior

experiences of policing shape citizens' willingness to engage and, as we explore below, such experiences are recognized in the context of the broader historical legacy of policing.

Historical legacies

Many participants stated that an awareness of the troubled history of policing in respect of particular minority ethnic groups was essential to understanding contemporary engagement with faith communities and FBOs. Whilst not necessarily interlinked with religion, participants drew attention to how the legacies of officer racism, and elements of over and under policing of minority ethnic citizens (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999), currently influence engagement with people of faith. To illustrate this, one participant described how his attempts to engage with those at a Sikh temple was undermined by the indifference of officers in the past: 'there might have been issues, they might not have got the service they deserve, that they require, so they will probably think that they need to take care of issues themselves and not contact the police' (INT8). Another participant stated that 'there's a real, from their side, […] perception of the police that we just don't like them and we are racist and we don't have any interest in dealing with them, don't want to know, unless it's nicking their kids' (INT12). Despite long-term attempts to eradicate racism from British constabularies (see Rowe, 2007) participants acknowledged that the perception of the police service as institutionally racist endures. The on-going, pernicious effects of 'stop and search' were seen as a significant contributor to sustaining this perception. For example, one participant explained how stop and search activities can produce negative consequences that ripple through faith communities:

> If I'm travelling and I'm stop searched, it may be for a genuine reason, but if [at] the Friday prayer that I've mentioned […] all of a sudden I'm telling another 500 people it's happened to me […] this is where the suspicion and trust can be lost. (INT7)

In respect of calls for increased police engagement with Muslim communities to ensure the effectiveness of current anti-terrorism policy, the historical legacy of over and under policing presents an acute problem because police officers continue to encounter suspicion and mistrust (Briggs et al 2006; Spalek and Imtoual, 2007; Spalek et al 2008; Spalek, 2010; Spalek and McDonald, 2010; Choudhury and Fenwick, 2011; Innes et al 2011).

FAITH AS POLICING

Faith based policing in principle

The role of FBOs in the delivery of public services has long been part of a wider debate about how citizens and communities might more actively participate in welfare provision. In this respect, there is evidence that citizens who actively practise a religion are more likely to volunteer to participate in welfare delivery programmes than those who do not practice a faith (Kitchen et al, 2006). It is sometimes inferred, therefore, that FBOs are a resource that can be tapped into in respect of recruiting volunteers for civic activity. Indeed, British policy makers have looked enviously to the USA where religious organizations often deliver a wide range of services to their members and to the wider community (Smidt, 2003). There is, however, little evidence to suggest that British FBOs can organize and provide welfare services in a similar way to those in the USA. The human capital that is generated through congregational life in the USA is distinctive and may not be present elsewhere (Cnaan et al, 2003). Nevertheless, our participants were generally of the view that FBOs were, in principle, well positioned to deliver police relevant services. This is because participants understood FBOs to operate according to 'moral' principles similar to those found in the police service:

> [T]here is that sort of moral level that often goes with a lot of the basics of faith. So people in faith will often want to maintain a certain standard, don't know quite how to describe it, but, you know, do good, inspire certain morals within their faith communities. (INT15)

Participants also saw FBOs as well placed to mobilise community resources. One officer, for example, noted that because 'faith groups have a huge footprint in our community' it may be possible to have a 'closer engagement with faith groups' in order to 'expand our reach into communities, for safeguarding purposes and welfare purposes' (INT2).

The delivery of police relevant services by FBOs was regarded by participants as a way of reducing demand on police resources at a time when constabularies are grappling with the budgetary consequences of state retrenchment. As one officer put it: 'the reality is […] we can't do everything, and in a time of austerity […] we are having to do more with less' (INT2). Participants considered that FBOs might be able to reduce demand on constabularies

in both informal and formal ways. In respect of informal activities, officers pointed, for example, to particular vulnerable citizens – citizens with mental illness, for example – who make demands on constabularies in the absence of alternative support (HMIC, 2015). As one officer explained, FBOs may be well placed to provide such individuals with support:

> [W]e talk about reducing demand around the drain on policing services. [T]here's a lot of safety, welfare calls we get around elderly, around vulnerable, that perhaps, actually, with a bit more thought and a bit more interaction perhaps, we could get that link in with individuals. So you might not even need to call the police actually if you have a system where vulnerable members of your community are visited on a regular basis. (INT3)

In respect of formal activities, participants regularly drew on the example of the Christian street patrols – often operating under the Street Angels and Street Pastors franchises (Bullock, 2014) – who care for citizens who find themselves in vulnerable situation late at night in town centres. This kind of formal intervention was seen as helpful in reducing demand on police resources:

> So there's things like when people are lying there, not needing medical assistance, but very drunk, street pastors will come and speak to them and sometimes take them to a location, give them a cup of coffee, help them get a taxi home. And I found the street pastors, because obviously faith based, were very good in terms of part of our overall solution to solving that problem. (INT1)

However, whilst there was enthusiasm among our participants for FBOs providing police relevant services in principle, there was scepticism about what FBOs could achieve in practice. Acknowledging that FBOs had the right 'attitude', one participant conceded 'it's just how you […] harness that, and what exactly you harness it for' (INT15). In their discussions of 'harnessing' FBOs, participants drew attention to particular problematic issues, which we discuss below, relating to the capacity and expertise, the motivation, and the regulation of FBOs.

Faith based policing in practice

Capacity and expertise of FBOs

Not all FBOs possess the capacity to deliver police relevant services. Some FBOs are very small and this affects the degree to which they are able to mobilise resources (Wuthnow, 2004; Chaves and Tsitsos, 2001; Coleman, 2003). Since some FBOs are very active in working within and reaching out to communities, whilst others are insular and focused primarily on the delivery of spiritual services to their members, FBOs play diverse roles within communities (Wuthnow 2004). Acknowledging this, one participant noted that, in respect of delivering police relevant services, 'some groups might not want to. I think you've got to […] accept that […] some of the smaller Christian groups […] are very much quite insular […] [Y]ou can't take it for granted that they'll all want to do that' (INT15). As another officer observed: 'You have to go to each venue to understand their role in the community' (INT10). Officers further pointed to the high degree of diversity within religious faiths, explaining that this presented difficulties when attempting to mobilise resources. As this officer explained:

> I just wonder, because of the […] various different parts of the Muslim community, how easy that would be for them to draw together […] And even differences between individual mosques, for example, it becomes harder then to have a […] recognised organization that can represent them all. (INT21)

Another participant concurred with this view and stated that it was therefore important to identify the ways in which faith groups are networked and to access such networks in order to encourage FBOs to deliver police relevant services:

> I think that would be an interesting thing to try and look at, you know, is there a kind of council meeting for the faith group where different people come together where, if there is a certain idea in an area, the police could go in and say 'would you do this, that and the other'. (INT13)

This observation chimes with previous research which has shown that sustainable faith driven welfare initiatives tend to derive from special-purpose parachurch organizations precisely

because individual churches are too small, diffuse, and lacking in resources to effectively organize alone (Coleman, 2003). Indeed, research has demonstrated that FBOs are unlikely to proactively generate initiatives and operate them independently but, rather, are more likely to work in conjunction with and be supported by others (Wuthnow, 2004). Our participants were aware of this and, as this officer explained, regarded 'close partnership' between the police and FBOs as essential:

> The thing that I've noticed about the church specifically is if you ask people they will respond. If you don't ask, then they don't respond or they respond in a way that's not, how can I put it, that's not effective as it could be [...] for the energy spent. So, if you have a specific request and an idea how you want that doing, if you ask, I'm sure people will come forward. If you say, well, we need to do something in [named area] for young people but we don't know what we are going to do, then actually coming forward is a little bit harder. So it's a kind of, I won't say instructed, but it really needs to be quite a close partnership as well. (INT13)

However, it should not be assumed that FBOs possess the expertise, management, and coordination capacities that are required in order to deliver police relevant services (Brudney, 1985; 2010). For example, one participant described how a drug drop-in project, instigated by churches in one constabulary, failed because of a lack of knowledge and experience of how to deliver a holistic response to the complex problem of drug addiction:

> There was no support there for those who were ready to come off the drugs and so it was [a] sort of sticking plaster to try and help and it seemed the right thing to do because there was a certain issue in an area that had been identified, but it wasn't done as good as it could have been done […] I think that's one example of sort of Christians wanting to do the right thing but maybe not getting it 100% right. (INT13)

Lack of knowledge and experience may also bring FBOs into conflict with statutory agencies in respect of which 'problems' are deemed suitable for FBOs to be concerned with. For example, one participant described how a church and local council disagreed about the need to increase provision for homeless people. As a consequence, the services provided by the church were almost closed down by the council who believed 'there's not a problem, you don't need to do this' (INT13).

Participants also raised questions about whether FBOs had the skills capacity to manage and coordinate projects effectively. Little is known about how volunteers in religious organizations are managed but there is no reason to assume that FBOs have sufficient capacity to manage projects or volunteers (Wuthnow, 2004). Rather, as participants told us, there are reasons to assume that such capacity is lacking. Indeed, previous research has drawn attention to the considerable challenges of managing the recruitment and induction of volunteers, as well as the difficulty of motivating them and developing their skills over time (Brudney, 2010). A lack of management infrastructure in FBOs can mean that volunteers are not put to good use:

> [W]e hear that volunteers come wanting to do some good, and then, you know, they're let down because no one's meeting them, briefing them, using their skills properly, and they often think, I wanted to help […] but actually it's pointless, because no one's really using me properly. (INT11)

As well as curtailing what might be achieved, this risks volunteer dissatisfaction and turnover and potentially puts volunteers at risk: 'You know there are a lot of people who go to church who want to do the best by people and will help people, but through that help could put themselves into a vulnerable position' (INT13).

Motivation of FBOs

Although the values of FBOs are often seen to mirror the values of the police service, our participants stated that not all FBOs possess the internal motivation to work in partnership with constabularies in order to translate their faith-based values into police relevant actions (see also: Wuthnow, 2004). In this respect, the CST is a good case in point. The relationship between the CST and constabularies is long established (Whine, 2011) and facilitates the co-production of crime control in a number of ways. For example, information-sharing agreements facilitate the exchange of intelligence about threats, and formalised meetings provide a mechanism through which the police and the CST can work together to support security arrangements for Jewish events. However, whilst participants were positive about the work of the CST, they thought it unlikely that other FBOs could replicate it. The motivation for CST to organize and deliver police relevant services was seen to have emerged from the

distinctive historical and cultural landscape of violent anti-Semitism in Britain (see also: Whine 2011). Without a similar motivation, participants considered it would be difficult for FBOs to generate such a systematic and organized collective response. As one officer explained, 'I don't think there is any other community that has its version of the CST, and that is just because of history I think [which] is obviously based around a […] threat' (INT21).

Regulation and accountability of FBOs

The regulation of FBOs was seen as essential to ensure that their activities are accountable to citizens, constabularies, and the state more generally. Participants pointed to the 'red tape' – the regulation, rules, and bureaucratic processes – that can sometimes hinder police relevant activities carried out by FBOs and limit what they might be able to achieve. Whilst this is often regarded as a source of stifling the co-production of crime control (see, for example: Hodgson, 2011), our participants regarded regulatory constraint as necessary and appropriate:

> Gone are the days when Mrs Goggins from down the road would run a youth club, you know. Actually we want professional people with skills doing that, who are able to safeguard and be aware of safeguarding, and I think that's a change that the church has had to adapt to, that it's had to put in place the policy, press and procedures, that by putting them in place, you have got a group of people who actually are aware how to work safely. (INT13)

Whilst participants therefore regarded it as important to hold those who deliver police relevant services to account, they also noted that processes of accountability were often missing in respect of FBOs. Participants stressed that regulation must be sufficient to ensure that any service provided by a FBO is delivered in a consistent, reliable way. One participant, for example, drew attention to significant problems in ensuring accountability in respect of FBOs:

> [W]e could set up a whole host of things that a particular group could do, as volunteers, but all of a sudden they could turn around and say, 'not doing that anyway', so you lose it, and what are you left with? Now you're back to square one really. So you put all your faith in something that anybody at any time can turn round.

There's no legislation to hold people to account for it, whereas actually the police are accountable for everything. (INT3)

Another officer described his frustration at what he saw as FBOs being insufficiently held to account for grants they received from constabularies: '[I]t would be a case of like £1,000, there you go, no accountability as to where that money got spent, so we don't know' (INT20). Participants saw the issue of accountability to be particularly pertinent in light of the potential for vigilantism to arise in the delivery of police relevant services, most notably in respect of FBOs carrying out public street patrol services. Whilst previous research has shown that there is, in practice, a great variety in the extent to which citizen patrols are embedded in frameworks of policing governance (Bullock, 2014), participants tended to argue that these forms of patrol are well organized and communication with constabularies is well established. However, participants viewed the indiscriminate proliferation of street patrols as something to be approached with caution because of the potential for individuals to act, at best, in an uncoordinated way and, at worst, in an uncontrollable way (see also: Sagar, 2005):

We've got our intel systems, we've got all […] the tools that we need to do our jobs, and if you do it from a superficial way, obviously it's not going to get you anywhere, is it? (INT19)

I think it has to be either closely monitored or done in a specific way. I don't think people should have carte blanche with the way they do their community policing themselves, if that makes sense. Because especially if they're not used to the way the police do things or the way things should be done legally, you're looking at people getting hidings that shouldn't necessarily get hidings or people being targeted who shouldn't necessarily be targeted. That has happened in the past. (INT8)

Therefore, whilst it is clear that our participants had sympathy for this form of co-producing crime control with FBOs, they also had a critical awareness of its parameters.

CONCLUSION

Religious faith has become increasingly salient within public policing. What we have called 'policing with faith' represents the various ways in which constabularies now engage with faith communities and FBOs; and what we have called 'faith as policing' represents the ways in which FBOs can and sometimes do deliver police relevant services. Both forms of interaction between faith communities, FBOs and the police service are driven (at least on the part of the police) by the ideals of promoting police responsiveness, increasing police legitimacy, and more effectively controlling crime. We have shown that such interaction does not occur naturally but, instead, needs to be orchestrated by constabularies in conjunction with faith communities and FBOs. Engaging in such orchestration raises a number of significant issues that constabularies must successfully navigate if they are to achieve the ambition of controlling crime. We summarise and interpret these issues below.

'Policing with faith' is shaped, and compromised, by a number of factors. First, interaction between the police and faith communities is influenced by officers' understanding of religious faiths as well as of the broader social and cultural relations relevant to them. The subtleties and dynamics of faith communities, and the ever-evolving intra-community tensions that often characterize them, are usually unknown to officers. Community dynamics are subject to change by national or international events that officers may struggle to keep up-to-date with. This lack of understanding can undermine the ability of officers to gain or sustain access to faith communities and FBOs. Therefore, generating an understanding among police officers of the dynamics of particular faith communities, at least to the extent that they intersect with crime problems, is an ambition of constabularies seeking to engage with those faith communities. Nevertheless, it is not the case that all officers need in-depth knowledge of faith and its connection to wider social relations in order to effectively engage. Instead, a keen interest, the right attitude, and a willingness to learn are more important. Secondly, the development of long-term ties between officers and local communities, which are seen as essential to engagement with faith communities, are often undermined by organizational issues such as officer redeployment or the retrenchment of services. Thirdly, and relatedly, frequent changes in the organizational commitment to engagement work, often driven by changes in national policy, leaves relationships between officers and faith communities subject to disruption. As a consequence, police engagement with faith communities and FBOs is rendered fragile by weak, transient ties. Finally, historical legacies

– most notably in respect of the history of police racism – continue to cast a long shadow that can make engagement work problematic. Taken together, these issues mean that engagement is more than simply a 'technical matter' that involves finding the means to open up avenues for dialogue between constabularies and faith communities. Rather, engagement is shaped by the meanings that officers and those in faith communities place on each other; meanings that are themselves informed by wider social structures and relations. As such, engagement between constabularies and faith communities has symbolic and moral qualities that need to be understood and negotiated if it is to lead to realizing the ambition of co-producing crime control.

As we have also shown, 'faith as policing' is seen as desirable by police personnel because FBOs are thought to adhere to values which accord with those of the police service, and are considered to be well positioned to lever community resources and deliver services in ways that alleviate demands on constabularies. Whilst there are certainly examples of British constabularies co-producing crime control with FBOs, the extent to which FBOs possess the capacity, expertise, and motivation to deliver police relevant services in appropriate, consistent, and accountable ways remains unknown. The ambition of policy-makers to encourage greater co-production of crime control therefore rests on a number of assumptions about the capacity and motivation of FBOs that we have critically interrogated. First, although FBOs are often seen as 'innately' willing and able to provide police relevant interventions, this assumption does not straightforwardly stand up to empirical scrutiny. As a consequence of internal diversity, varying sizes, different outlooks regarding the role of faith in the community, differing motivations to provide public services, and varying technical ability among individuals, many FBOs may be less able and less willing to co-produce crime control than has been assumed. Second, although the delivery of police relevant services by FBOs is seen to offer a way of reducing demand on constabularies – something viewed as especially important at a time of state retrenchment – in practice it can generate demands on the police service. For the co-production of crime control to be effective, constabularies must fuel the delivery of services by FBOs by, for example, identifying suitable FBOs, motivating them to participate, sharing information, making joint decisions about the delivery of interventions, and managing or coordinating service delivery. This therefore alters, rather than removes, officers' responsibility for and engagement in aspects of crime control (see: Garland, 1996). Third, whilst motivating FBOs to deliver police relevant services is seen as desirable the successful co-production of this form of crime control depends upon

constabularies orienting officers towards new ways of working with the communities they police. The history of attempts to promote citizen participation in police work suggests that this will continue to be difficult, not least because of officer attachment to conventional modes of crime control, the organizational configuration of constabularies, and the considerable investment required to equip officers with the necessary skills (Myhill, 2006; Bullock, 2014). Taken together, these are weighty issues that present significant challenges to those who attempt to intensify and strengthen the ways in which FBOs and constabularies co-produce crime control.

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