

“There’s always people around to help”

*A study of worldviews, social practices, and autonomy in
Freetown Christiania*

David Amado-Blanco Gonzalez

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Sustainability Studies



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Abstract:

Sustainability science has recently seen a growth of literature focused on individuals' "inner dimensions" as a vehicle for transformative social change, an approach argued to be too individualistic. This thesis fits between both excessively structural and individualistic models of social transformation by framing inner dimensions into a theory of social change through collective action.

Christiania was chosen as a case study of an occupied space to probe into the interactions between material and symbolic work. Through semi-structured interviews and participant observation, I found that the expanded sense of community and the co-operative habitus enable a degree of social experimentation which allows the establishment of practices following alternative worldviews. The introduction of neoliberal worldviews and other pressures caused by conflicts with the state threaten this. I call for more research on the ways that autonomous spaces serve as laboratories for communal ways of living and grounding alternative worldviews.

Keywords: inner dimensions, interstitial spaces, subjective work, urban squatting, worldviews, social practices

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1 Introduction

At this point of environmental degradation and existential threat, the need for a deep transformation of our system is widely shared (Davelaar, 2021). In the search for a more holistic paradigm that incorporates the human-nature interconnections better, inner dimensions have been proposed to have great potential to create deep change in our social systems (Woiwode, et al., 2021). These dimensions include our paradigms, consciousness, values, mindsets, beliefs, and spirituality, in whatever way they are conceptualised. Such a literature came about in reaction to more traditional understandings of society which were overly structural, leaving no space for agency in their theories. Therefore, several authors focused on these inner qualities arguing that changes in our individual values and cognition results in social change (Ives, et al., 2018).

Even though there is potential in increasing the focus on such inner dimensions -specially to give space to individual agency against structural models that do not allow it-, Boda and colleagues (Boda, et al., 2022) convincingly argue that inner dimensions literature represents a case of methodological individualism, in which the structural barriers to social change are unduly ignored and which hopes instead for widespread individual change. They indicate that this renders the so-called “inward turn” in sustainability research ill-equipped to deal with social and environmental issues, and instead propose an approach which incorporates said inner dimensions into a model of collective social transformation.

A useful concept stemming from the inner transformations literature, and that which I have chosen to contextualise in this paper, is that of worldviews. It captures several forms and aspects of inner dimensions and facilitates their analysis in one framework, thus representing a prime opportunity to adapt these to a less individualistic social theory. Here, I take the following definition: “inescapable, overarching systems of meaning and meaning-making that to a substantial extent inform how humans interpret, enact, and co-create reality” (Hedlund-de Witt & Hedlund-de Witt, 2017, p. 4).

Interesting communities to study in this context are squats and other intentional communities. Living in autonomous arrangements, with self-imposed rules, social structures and norms allows for an environment where alternative paradigms or worldviews can materialize desired practices and spaces, quite literally building a world that represents and reproduces them (Vasudevan, 2014a). Thus, these communities are especially well suited for investigating the relationship between inner dimensions and social practices in a form of collective action against standard social arrangements.

2 Aims

This thesis has four related aims; three of them explanatory and one methodological:

- Aim A: Investigate how worldviews coalesce or diverge in urban squats, using the case of Freetown Christiania.
- Aim B: Clarify the relationship between individual worldviews and the social-ecological practices and social relations of the community.
- Aim C: Study the barriers and opportunities that conflicts with the state can pose to the transformative potential of these spaces in the subjective realm.
- Aim D: Test the potential of integrating constructs from the inner dimensions literature into a more collective social theory.

To clarify, my general goal here is not to establish whether worldviews created social practices or the other way around in a deeper philosophical sense, that is a job for the philosophers in the infinite debate between idealism and materialism. I simply intend to understand the causal relationships between both in a practical, real life setting so that any generalisable conclusions found here can help guide the steering of potentially transformative spaces in society. This normative goal adds to the aim of contributing to the literature on subjective dimensions of sustainability transformation by investigating the relation between symbolic and material work in an urban occupied space, which has received less attention in inner dimension literatures. The analysis laid out in this essay thus builds on critiques to both excessively individualistic and excessively structural social theories and theories of social transformation; to do this, the idea is to contextualise inner dimensions (using worldviews as unifying concept) by including them in a theory of collective social transformation.

In this thesis, I aim to paint a general picture of the worldview landscape and dynamics in Christiania and explore the context that the community provides for grounding and spreading worldviews. The occupied nature of the space brings about different conflicts with the state, which is an interference that cuts across the different research questions but is explored more specifically in one of them. This is done through qualitative research exploring the points of view of some neighbours in detail, and therefore does not intend to produce specific measures of indicators, but instead identifying the general processes and variables related to the aims above.

Thus, the research questions and sub questions which I elaborated from the aims are:

- RQ1 (relating to Aim A). What worldviews exist within Christiania, how diverse are they?
 - SQ1: How have they evolved over time in this space, are they coalescing or diverging?
- RQ2 (related to Aims B and C). How are individual worldviews related to the spreading and framing of social practices and organisations tied to sustainability in this community?
 - SQ2.1: How does the community's autonomous nature and occupied past affect the relationship between individual worldviews and social practices?
 - SQ2.2: Can causal relationships between individual worldviews and social practices be mapped? Have these practices lead to changes in worldviews?
- RQ3 (related to Aim C). How do conflicts with the state affect the possibilities of this space to transform worldviews and habits away from neoliberal subjectivity, both within and outside the community?

3 Case background

Occupied spaces such as squats have been the focus of studies by critical social science for decades. Be it from the point of view of urban planning, political science or sustainability science they have been understood in many different ways: social experiments, points of resistance to neoliberal urbanism, or materializations of alternatives to capitalism. One of the most prominent examples of these spaces, which I chose as the case to study, is the Freetown Christiania: an occupied neighbourhood placed in the abandoned military barracks of Bådsmandsstræde in Copenhagen, Denmark, existing formally since 1971.

Christiania is placed in a privileged place in terms of proximity to nature, as the military barracks where it is located border an artificial lake (see Figure 1). Unlike other military fortifications in Denmark, which have neatly kept grass on their ramparts with barely any trees or bushes, the vegetation on the ramparts in Christiania has been largely left to grow and evolve to its own accord. As a result, the area is a highly biodiverse and functional ecosystem. Therefore, the lakeside parts of the town resemble more a wild forest with nature trails than a park in the middle of the city or a historical monument.



Figure 1. Map showing the location of Christiania in Copenhagen, seen bordering a man-made lake (OpenStreetMap, 2016).

The space is intentional, having common goals such as self-government, autonomy, common ownership of land, and individual freedom under responsibility to the community (Verco, 2018). To support this balance between individual freedom and commitment to the community, they employ a deliberative democracy model based on consensus decision-making. This means that as long as there is one person that opposes a motion, it cannot be passed. It is also a relatively local democracy: each of the 14 areas in which it is divided have local meetings, and there are common meetings for larger issues. But most interestingly for us, foundational goals included a direct call to reduce environmental impact, as written in their declaration of intentions: “the joint efforts must continue to be about showing that psychological and physical destitution/pollution can be diverted/prevented” (Thomassen, 2013 quoted in Verco, 2018, p. 99). Christiania is a member of the Global Ecovillage Network, and even though environmentalism is not as prevalent today, the practices that came with it have survived (Winter, 2016).

Through its first three decades Christiania enjoyed a relatively large autonomy and in the 1990s, thanks to the 1989 Christiania Law, also a legalised status which gave it more political stability (Karpantschhof, 2011). This all changed, starting in 2004 with a new Danish right-wing government which was explicitly against Christiania’s existence, with the police presence increasing in the space and more and more difficulties put in place. This culminated in 2012 with a plan to “normalise” the area signed by Christiania itself in order to maintain its existence, a plan which made Christiania buy most of the territory and lease the rest (Ntounis & Kanellopoulou, 2017).

This meant the cancellation of their communal governance rights, and the formal application of Danish law within Christiania. From then, the rents have hiked up, with the area becoming privately owned by a Christiania legal entity (Coppola & Vanolo, 2014). The formal change came in addition to a slower process of gentrification of the surrounding area and the growth of tourism, which had already been changing the character and situation of the community for some time.

4 Theoretical framework

The analysis is based on a combination of three theoretical frameworks. As general framework I use an overarching theory of social transformation beyond capitalism by Marxist sociologist Erik Olin Wright. Second, I use a framework of worldviews called Integrative Worldview Framework (IWF) to conceptualise and analyse worldviews. Last is a theory of ecological habitus to explain human longer-lasting habits and skills, used to help conceptualise social practices. These will be treated individually in the next subsections.

4.1 Wright's theory of social reproduction and transformation

In his book *Envisioning Real Utopias*, Erik Olin Wright (2010) develops a theory of social transformation which typifies strategies of overcoming capitalism -here taken to be neoliberal capitalism- into three main kinds: ruptural, interstitial and symbiotic. These respectively represent models of violent revolution, building relatively autonomous alternatives to capitalism, and collaborating with states and capitalist institutions to undermine them from within. Christiania clearly represents a case of interstitial strategy, as it intends to build social norms and practices autonomously.

Interstitial projects like this usually follow an anarchist-inspired ethic of practice, where the process of revolution itself is as important as the intended goal, and thus the community tries to embody and practice the principles they want to see in the world. Through this ethic, interstitial strategies aim to erode the workings of capitalism by incorporating characteristics of post-capitalist systems into their social relations. Different reasonings can be invoked to adopt such a strategy: it can ultimately be about either creating conditions for a ruptural transformation or to create gradual changes which will transform societies beyond capitalism in an evolutionary fashion. Regardless, the logic is to create spaces which serve as alternatives to capitalism today -as much as possible- and expand these so that the state is forced to give them more space and/or adopt parts of their mechanisms. By occupying a space in the centre of a capital city, Christiania specifically also points to the inequalities created by neoliberal urbanization (Brenner & Theodore, 2002).

Wright also distinguishes four main mechanisms for capitalism to reproduce itself in his theory, so in a way four domains in which projects for social transformation must work. The first is coercion, meaning plain state repression of alternative ideologies and dissenting organisations and individuals. Second is the creation of institutional rules that minimise the risk posed by those alternatives that

must use these institutions, e.g. representative democracy, which forces socialist and anti-capitalist parties to water down their programme to gain enough votes. Third come material interests, i.e. tying the wellbeing of individuals and collectives to the health of capitalist economy, as everyone fares worse when there is a crisis.

Last in these modes of social reproduction is the subjective side, which the main focus of this study, and which operates through ideology and culture. These are the mechanisms which create subjects that are predisposed to behave, think and interpret life in ways that perpetuate capitalism. Here Wright distinguishes *ideology* -the conscious systems of values, beliefs and general matrices of meaning making- from *culture* -the unconscious skills, tastes and habits which help certain practices to survive-.

In this thesis, I adapt these two concepts to make them workable with the assistance of the two other theories explained below. Culture, as Wright himself points out (2010, p. 283), is akin to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*: a set of embodied dispositions and ways of being which stem from the sets of social relations in which we partake, and at the same time affect these relations. Ideology is substituted here with worldviews, since they are also more conscious sets of beliefs and values. This is not to imply that we will always consciously relate our day to day lives to our worldview, rather that they may be investigated more directly through self-reported values and beliefs. Worldviews serve here then as a more structured, expanded, and novel way to study ideology.

Implicit in this framework there is a dynamic of social transformation, as social structures which condition our subjectivities arise from historical processes and are therefore longer lasting. These help to shape our worldviews and habitus in different ways, as worldviews are more immediate sets of ideas and beliefs which we can adopt more quickly, whereas a habitus takes more time to (de)construct as it is conditioned by a complex net of habits and personal characteristics. Thus, even if our ideas or beliefs change at the conscious level, the ways in which we interact with the world will take longer to reflect such a change. The contrary is also true: if the social fields we partake in are changed and we are exposed to new social practices, our worldview will change gradually.

4.2 The Integrative Worldview Framework

In her PhD dissertation, Annick Hedlund-de Witt (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013a) explores the importance of worldviews for sustainability transformations. The concept of worldview, she explains, is born at the intersection between many different social science constructs related to subjectivity, such as religion, culture, ideology or discourse. Worldviews are coherent, systematic frames of meaning

making which help humans create relations to and interpretations of the events and material realities around them.

She then introduces a framework (the Integrative Worldview Framework or IWF) which establishes a set of heuristic axes through which to interpret the most basic assumptions and values in a worldview:

- *Ontology*: How the nature of reality is understood, e.g., what is real, does a divinity exist, how is nature understood, etc.
- *Epistemology*: What can be known, and how we can obtain valid knowledge.
- *Axiology*: A moral system, describing what a good life is about.
- *Anthropology*: Ideas about what humans are, what their goal is, and what position they hold towards nature.
- *Societal vision*: A prescribed social order, and a type of social relations that fit with it.

With support from the sociological and psychological literatures informing this framework, she then identifies four ideal-types of worldviews present in the West: traditional, modern, postmodern and integrative.

The traditional worldview fuses the secular and the religious spheres: religious understanding answers all the important questions, religious and political authorities are the same, and this world is understood as the creation or expression of a God which exists in a realm inaccessible to us. In contrast, the modern worldview emphasises the importance of rationality -and thus science- as the only way to reach objective knowledge, and thus relies in science and technology to solve issues. It also includes a more individualistic view of society, where humans are assumed to act according to their own self-interest. Lastly, the postmodern worldview is understood here as the reaction to this modern worldview by relying on other forms of knowledge (e.g. artistic, intuitive or emotional) as equally valid, and fighting for liberation of oppressed groups in society.

The last ideal-type, the integrative worldview, is proposed by Hedlund-de Witt as an emerging worldview which is represented by the culture of contemporary spirituality, which is characterised by a re-spiritualisation of nature. This movement stems from the 60s countercultural movement and its many strands and is therefore fractured and diverse. Out of these different strands, the integrative worldview refers to those which do not reject the achievements of modernity in its entirety and try

to incorporate scientific knowledge by integrating and synthesising them with other sources of knowledge and guidance such as spirituality.

4.1 Ecological habitus

Stemming from Norbert Elias' early use of the term and Pierre Bourdieu's more comprehensive theory of social practice, the concept of habitus has become quite prominent in modern sociology. It indicates a set of embodied preferences, tastes, skills, accents, etc. which are influenced by the social relations we are embedded in. In this social theory, individual actors are not the prime object of study, but the social relations among them. These relations, situated in a specific space, define a social field in which actors play their habitus according to their position in said field (their social capital). In environmental sociology and social psychology this concept has been adapted to study an ecological habitus, defined in the seminal paper by Debbie Kasper as "the embodiment of a durable yet changeable system of ecologically relevant dispositions, practices, perceptions, and material conditions—perceptible as a lifestyle—that is shaped by and helps shape socioecological contexts" (Kasper, 2009, p. 318). In the context of this study, this concept is extremely useful to link individual's understandings and lifestyles to their socioecological context.

The theoretical hypothesis I intend to test here is related mainly to Aim B. I hypothesise that a worldview may spread in certain spaces where it can set related social practices. This would be done through facilitating the adoption of a habitus consistent with this worldview. Since interstitial spaces such as Christiania have certain autonomy over their social norms and rules, I postulate that they facilitate this process. Once established in the community, this subjective change could spread outside of the community through interactions with outsiders.

5 Methodology

The overarching methodological framework is that of a case study, as the intent of my study is to explore the worldview landscape and dynamics and test my hypothesis about cognitive and behavioural dynamics in a contemporary real-life situation. This requires being able to determine a group which has the desired characteristics (being an occupied space) and analysing it both in relation to my general aims and as an illustration of the dynamics which I have hypothesised in the above sections. For this, a case study is the appropriate methodology, as it is concerned with the interpretation of aspects of social life in relation to phenomena of interest, done within the real-life context of a bound system (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). In other words, it is appropriate where the understanding of these phenomena is likely to include important context from the system it is embedded in, especially when the boundaries between context and the phenomenon of study are blurry (Yin, 2009). From this outlook and the selection of a single case, the research design took the form of an instrumental case study, defined as one in which “a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to revise a generalization” (Silverman, 2013, p. 143).

5.1 Ontological and epistemological stance

As a field born at the intersection between the natural and social sciences, and attempting to also include knowledge from other stakeholders in society, sustainability science has no prescribed onto-epistemological position (Isgren, Jerneck, & O'Byrne, 2017). In this thesis, I adopt a critical realist stance, which has already been proposed as an adequate meta-theory for knowledge integration across disciplinary boundaries (Cockburn, 2022). Critical realism recognises, as its name implies, that there is a reality with mechanisms that operate independent to human understanding (existential intransitivity), while science -being a social product- offers different ways to interpret it and construct knowledge about it (epistemological relativism) (Bhaskar, 1998). This distinction between an independent reality and the constructed and contested knowledge about it make critical realism especially suitable for transdisciplinary sustainability research and sustainability practice (Bhaskar, et al., 2010). Social sciences following critical realism study generative social structures and how they may create different social orders when in different situations, offering a good base also for projects like mine which attempt to create emancipatory knowledge (Lacey, 2013). In the case of this thesis, critical realism fits in nicely with the study of material conditions (including social practices) and the ways that groups or individuals with different worldviews interpret and co-create them in interaction with their socioecological contexts.

5.2 Positionality

Sustainability science is inherently a normative science, with the explicit goal of creating knowledge that is not only valid, but useful for practice by pointing what must be changed in order to ensure the sustainability of our systems (Miller, 2013). Nonetheless, its normativity has in many cases been used to disguisedly defend and justify a social and economic growth-based model which is proven to unsustainable in its core.

In this thesis, I attempt not only to be normative, but to be critical and create emancipatory social science which can help us to guide policy and society into a different social model which is not only more sustainable, but also fairer. Here, I follow the “sustainability as a real utopia” heuristic to guide sustainability research (Harnesk & Isgren, 2021). This is a heuristic which adapts the social theory and structural understandings coming from Erik Olin Wright’s sociology to sustainability science and proposes an agenda to frame and undertake research which takes explicitly as its goal to support social transformation, mainly by informing social movements that can act as agents of change (Isgren, et al., 2019).

5.3 Methods

5.3.1 Qualitative research design

As my topic of research involves discerning complex social and ecological relations, as well as generating descriptions of layered sets of values and beliefs, qualitative methods came as the natural choice. This is because of their power for weaving narratives and creating maps of meaning and causal chains on the base of detailed and complex data. I here followed the methodological steps of most research regarding ecological habitus and worldviews, both of which usually favour qualitative methods in order to maximise the amount of detail captured in the data and facilitate nuanced assessments and interpretations (see Kasper, 2009; Kasper, 2008; Hedlund-de Witt, 2013a; Ford, 2019).

In my research, the main sources of information I used were interviews and direct observation; participant observation played a secondary role. I collected data over the course of a month-long fieldwork period in March-April 2022, during which I stayed at the house of the Christiania Researcher in Residence (CRiR) programme. This is a local programme developed to encourage the creation of scientific knowledge and artistic output about Christiania and increase its relevance as a unique site for the creation for both research and artistic projects.

The main unit of analysis of the project is the community itself, as it is the dynamics and characteristics of Christiania which are the focus of the aims. However, the units of observation are neighbours and founders of institutions related to sustainability. The latter became relevant because they serve as institutionalised encodings of some social-ecological practices which could be studied more readily than the daily practices of individuals.

5.3.2 Interviews

As mentioned above, the main unit of observation consisted of individuals, and the main method of data collection were interviews. Due to the breadth of topics, and in order to maximise the amount of detail and information which I could obtain, I chose to undertake in-depth semi-structured interviews. These were designed to serve in such a way that the flow of one item to the other was as natural as possible and interfered minimally with the connections they were making between topics.

In total I interviewed 5 people, chosen after a purposive sampling: two participants were chosen because of their relationship to organisations which work in issues broadly related to sustainability, one because of their connection with a spiritual institution and to see how this impacts their vision of Christiania, and the last two to have a sample of random neighbours. Although the interviews were designed to last around an hour, most ended up in the range of 70-75 minutes, with one being significantly shorter at 53 minutes. They were all recorded after ensuring oral consent from the participants and then transcribed. The interviewees were anonymised for confidentiality.

The transcript contents were then coded using NVIVO software using a hybrid inductive-deductive method. Here, the theoretical framework generates the initial codes to look for in the texts, but new ideas in the transcripts are created as new codes, and the original ones are regrouped, rearranged or combined depending on what is found. I ran this process recursively, running over the interviews several times until I was satisfied with the coding of the content and the cohesiveness of the codes. A thematic approach was then used to analyse the data, grouping codes with similar ideas together. Together with this, a heuristic analysis of their worldviews based on the IWF was included to interpret the interactions between different elements of their worldview.

5.3.3 Direct and participant observation

During my time in the field, I also experienced day to day life in Christiania as a form of direct observation of what people's ecological habitus look like. From these observations, a set of field notes were taken, which were transcribed and coded at the end of my fieldwork. Additional punctual observations as participant in social events and events related to sustainability were also taken, the

main one being the only action day (the term in Christiania for a collective activity for the benefit of the community) that Christiania has had in the last two years. This consisted of a collective trash picking event attended by volunteers from the community.

5.4 Methodological limitations

The main limitation found was the short time spent in the field, as in this detailed type of study observation plays a big role in triangulation to support results from the main source of data (interviews). This requires living and bonding with the community for an extended period in order to gain access to many areas of social life, as one would in ethnographic research (Creswell, 2013). The month stayed in Christiania allowed for limited access to the less public or open parts of Christianites' lives and creating limited connections, precluding the extensive time needed to nuance such in-depth knowledge. Nonetheless, I took care to not typify someone's worldview or dispositions without enough supporting data, making sure that validity standards were satisfied with each classification or description. For these validity criteria, I used well-known techniques in case study research (Yin, 2009): construct validity was ensured through the use of different sources of data for triangulation and establishing a chain of evidence, internal validity through pattern matching with the theoretical framework and hypothesis, and external validity through comparison with the literature found in the literature review phase.

6 Results and discussion

The research questions aim to explore the interactions between worldviews and social practices related to sustainability, which are observable both as inhabitant's lifestyles and through the work done by specific institutions. To make the general aims more workable, they have been designed to pertain to my hypothesis that individuals in the community can attempt to embed their worldview through the establishment of social practices. The subsections below follow the order of the research questions and are therefore finished by discussing the results in relation to each of them.

6.1 Diversity and evolution of worldviews

6.1.1 Interviewees' worldviews

The analysis of the interviews, structured and interpreted according to the worldview aspects of the IWF, revealed mixed worldviews between the participants. With the nature of the interviews being in-depth, and the classification put forth by the IWF consisting of ideal-types (i.e., idealised pure worldviews which are unlikely to exist isolated in complex, real contexts), it became clear that even those interviewees which had a very dominant type of worldview also held ideas which belonged to others. As an example, I2 showed an almost purely traditional worldview, with their faith informing all aspects of it, yet they recognise the potential of science and technology to make life better as long as it is socially controlled and geared towards good; this combination and synthesis of types of knowledge is characteristic of an integrative worldview's epistemology. Below you can find a depiction of the results from summarising and interpreting their worldviews (Table 1), which shows the classification of worldview aspects of each participant and of their overall worldview.

Table 1. Table showing the worldview classifications of the participants. The worldview ideal types are coded as follows: T = traditional, M = modern, P = postmodern and I = integrative. None of the participants fit perfectly into a worldview category. Own work.

Name	Anthropology	Axiology	Epistemology	Ontology	Social view	Worldview
I1	I/M	I	I	I	P/I	Integrative
I2	T	T	I/T	T	T	Traditional
I3	I	I	P	I	P/I	Integrative
I4	P/M	P/I	I	M	P/I	Postmodern
I5	I	I/T	I	I	I/P	Integrative

6.1.2 How diverse are worldviews in Christiania?

Three of the interviewees were classified as mostly integrative: I1 (a manager of the recycling station), I3 (the founder of the nature protection association) and I5. I2 was classified as traditional, and I4 as postmodern. But how representative is the mix found here of the community as a whole?

The majority of integrative worldviews in the interviewees is likely caused by the small sample size. It is however also possible that Christiania has a larger proportion of integratives than an average sample in the West since it was started in the context of the 70s counterculture movement, which is one of the origins of the contemporary spirituality community where integrative worldviews are most represented (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013a).

All interviewees stated that there has always been a big mix of worldviews in Christiania, which is a direct result of the community's founding emphasis on being an open space where everyone is welcome:

"I think also the thing that we are so mixed out here, we come from everywhere, is that... A lot of people we have our own ideals, and then [...] we try to make our common ideals" I1

"There was space for everyone, every belief, you know, it was just respected. You could be whoever you were." I5

As reflected in the first quote, there are few common values in the space, but there are efforts to maintain those which are established. The central belief which I identified to be common to all interviewees is a focus on community life as central to their axiology, i.e. that to live a good life one

must be actively involved in -and at peace with- one's close community. This extended sense of community within diversity is embodied in its consensus decision-making system, and is what has maintained Christiania as a functioning society even though there are conflicts arising from the extreme variety of worldviews:

"I love our area meetings because it's all kinds of people: it's pushers and activists and architects and everybody gets together and actually listens to each other, and without yelling, and if somebody yells then he kind of comes back next week, next time and says: 'Oh, I'm sorry for yelling. I just got really excited.'" 14

The effort to come together putting aside differences and make decisions/projects has been heightened when the community has undergone a crisis of some sort, such as the opioid epidemic of the 80s or in periods with gang related shootings:

"And in the end, we have to say stop. And then we made this junk blockade, a blockade against hard drugs. And to the people who were on drugs, they gave the offer to go in the countryside for a year and then come back and get the room again without drugs." 13

"And then something happened with a shooting and then there was a meeting and everybody came together and fixed the problem." 14

So, in regard to RQ1, there is a large diversity of worldviews in Christiania, but also a sense of community among diversity which facilitates finding common ground across diverging opinions. There are also some common values -as is to be expected from an intentional space- which are hugely important to this sense of community and are embedded in the decision-making structures.

6.1.3 Changing worldviews in Christiania

The community is characterised by a high variety of worldviews, and according to both interviewees and literature, this has always been the case. But is this changing? When asked about how the character and spirit of Christiania has changed, interviewees have pointed to a diminishing of its original utopian outlook, in favour of a growing profit-driven mentality. Likely this is related to the makeup of my sample: most of the interviewees are older and have been living in Christiania for a long time. Only two of them have been living in Christiania for less than 20 years, and only one of them comes from a middle-class background. However, all interviewees interpreted these shifts mainly as a result of demographic change; as the original hippies and activists have disappeared and been replaced with new middle-class people, the character of Christiania started to change:

“But then there comes a lot of young people with children, and they have all the money. We didn't have any money, we were not material. We were more social and sharing. [...] And I mean they have totally different ideas.” 13

“The new people that come in, they're people with means like, they have more money. And there's not so much space for the individual if you don't fit in [outside society], which in the old days was part of it [Christiania].” 15

This reflects arguments in scientific literature which point to an accelerated gentrification in the surrounding neighbourhood of Christianshavn, triggered by the presence of Christiania, which gave it an “alternative profile” and attracted more and more middle-class “creatives” into both Christiania and its surroundings (Thörn, 2012). These newcomers are seen by older inhabitants to be “more material”, i.e. to have included neoliberal ideas into their worldviews and to have been shaped by neoliberal subject building processes. This is compounded by the fact that, in contrast to many other occupied spaces, Christiania insists on being an *open space* accessible to anyone, instead of being insulated from the outside to protect its way of life (Thörn, 2012).

In response to SQ1, we can see that Christiania is going in a direction where neoliberal worldviews and logic are becoming more and more common, and that worldviews in general are on a diverging trajectory, creating more internal division. This diverging of worldviews can seem counterintuitive, as the community emphasises the protection of common values. But one of the most important guiding principles is the acceptance of diversity and individuality, so paradoxically one of the common values serves as a barrier to having converging worldviews. However, as seen above, in moments of crisis the community rallies together, so there is some hope for increasing their social cohesion (if not their homogeneity). This is perfectly encapsulated by an interviewee when asked about whether people are converging into common values:

“Oh, I think it's going the wrong way. But it has before and then it's changed again, so let's see”. 13

6.2 Relationship between individual worldviews and social practices

Christiania has a host of social practices and concepts which reduce its environmental impact, that much is undeniable. As explained in the case background, environmentalism is not necessarily a central value of most Christianites, and the presence of these social practices is partly due to its foundational environmental goal (Winter, 2016). However, the lack of resources experienced in the

community's beginnings were pointed by my interviewees as a key reason for this low impact, for example in the case of building (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. A self-built house on the Eastern border of the lake. Houses built by their inhabitants out of recycled materials were the norm in the first decades of Christiania. Own work.

This DIY ethic and the mentality of reusing building materials is still prevalent today, e.g. 14's metalwork done out of scrap metal. The durability of these practices points to the existence of a coherent ecological habitus in the community, with a consistent set of embodied practices and predispositions due to the use of long-standing structures and social practices which keep its environmental impact low (Kasper, 2009). But how much space do individuals have to shape and add to this ecological habitus according to their own worldview? This is explored below in relationship to SQ2.1.

6.2.1 How is the relationship between individual worldviews and social practices affected by the occupied, autonomous nature of the space?

As seen above, Christiania is a highly diverse community, and it has always been accepting of people with all kinds of worldviews; but it also displays relatively high levels of social cohesion and sense of community. This extended sense of community provides its inhabitants a high level of support when establishing new projects within the community. This support is seen as having access to helping hands from the community, but also as the possibility to learn from skilled neighbours:

"If you have an idea that's really good, there's always people around to help you. It makes it way easier actually.

[...]

The good thing about Christiania is that everything you want to learn, somebody knows it in here. And you can always go to ask and people are willing to help you.” 14

“There’s also always a project you can start up or attend or talk to people about.” 11

This we can understand as a specific co-operative habitus: in understanding new projects as part of the community and being predisposed to help out, one starts to see the space -and, crucially, the ways of living socially in it- as something that is built together. The existence of these spaces for social entrepreneurship which are supported by the community is a perfect example of the ways in which occupied spaces create new social fields where it is possible to explore a different sense of shared inhabitance (Vasudevan, 2014a).

This environment with space and support for individuals to pursue their ideas shows great potential for projects with some emancipatory nature, i.e. which support a communal understanding of common life or a different narrative to neoliberal sustainability. Two examples are its nature protection agency and the reusing practices of the recycling station. For example, I3 emphasised the involvement of the community in many aspects, from ornithological surveys to signature collection against the clearing of wild areas.

I1’s experience in setting up new practices at the recycling station is similar, and they explicitly emphasised the freedom they enjoy with the Christiania recycling station as one of the reasons for the innovations they were able to introduce:

“Copenhagen community, they sent out people [...] they had to come and question about how we did our job and how the station worked. [...] And because I am hired by Christiania and not the community [Copenhagen], I can do what I want, you know, as long as it is legal.” 11

Nonetheless, as new projects which use resources or spaces from an area must pass approval from the area meeting, it must not be opposed by the neighbours to pass. Here, the existence of few common values comes into play, and the increasing presence of people who have been more strongly influenced by neoliberal subjectivity poses a different type of risk to the space’s emancipatory potential. Those projects which are perceived to be too radical by a person with a worldview influenced by neoliberal subjectivity may be shut down. As an example, a resident who I had a conversation with told me about some sustainability activists in their area wanting to use one of the common spaces to set up meetings for their activist group. The proposal was shut down, as

there are other newcomers in the area who are against the type of activism they were doing (Anonymous, personal communication, 2022).

I am confident in concluding, in relation to SQ2.1, that the community's autonomous nature affects the establishment of social practices according to individuals' worldviews in contradicting ways. I have identified here a certain tension between the ease to set up projects that push for local sustainability or community care, and the difficulty that other projects which are more explicitly political may encounter if they are perceived by some to be from a rival ideology. The first are supported by the sense of community and co-operative habitus, whereas the second are sometimes hindered by the need to achieve consensus to use common spaces and resources.

The case of Christiania is interesting, as such ideological (here, worldview) divisions in other decentralised, heterogeneous squats have been managed using a consensual-majority decision-making model (Piazza, 2013): decisions are usually consensual, unless there is a stalemate, when there is a switch to majority vote. This ensures speed in decision-making (which has been a criticism of some interviewees towards the consensus system) and that ideas that are broadly in line with the space's community are implemented. The proposal of this model would however be impossible in Christiania, as it is a central source of collective identity and social cohesion, by ensuring that "the structure has spaciousness and prevent the social marginalizing and expulsion that we usually see in the rest of the Danish society" (Christiania, 2022).

The barrier identified here ties in with the findings of Section 6.1.3 above, showing one specific way in which the introduction of newcomers who are closer to neoliberal worldviews has impacts on the establishment of emancipatory projects in the community. This is not to say that ideas that push an alternative sustainability agenda are impossible to put in place, but that the process of setting up networks, projects or events which are radical is complex and its outcome largely dependent on negotiation and context. Two examples of institutions which try to spread social practices in line with their founder's worldview are explored below in relation to SQ2.2.

6.2.2 Can causal relationships be found between worldviews and social practices?

Christianias Frie Natur

The two main organisations which manage and take care of Christiania's nature and wildlife are the Gardener Group (Gartnergruppe) and the Association for the Protection of Christiania's Wild Nature ("Foreningen til Bevarelse af Christianias Frie Natur", from now CFN). The former consists of a group of gardeners and biologists who take care of the vegetation on all of Christiania on a daily basis

whereas CFN focuses on work to protect the biodiversity of the space. The two are close collaborators and together have developed the care plan upon which decisions in terms of nature management are taken (Christianias Frie Natur, 2020), based on a series of principles (Figure 3).

“Principles of good nature:

- 1. The minimization principle. That is, restraint with intervention towards nature. Often it is best left alone. At CA [Christiania], we would rather work with –than against– nature = ecological care.*
- 2. The principle of compensation: In any future use of new land, nature must be compensated. So if you intervene somewhere, you have to do something in return somewhere else.*
- 3. The restoration principle: Any damage to nature must be repaired as far as possible, in the same way for 'natural heritage' as if it were cultural heritage.*
- 4. The principle of subsidiarity: Every individual area of CA must, while respecting the principles listed here, be responsible for planning and care itself, if that is what is desired.*
- 5. Careful decision-making: The alternative to a negative intervention against nature must be well informed before the decision is made. E.g., moving a path rather than felling a path tree.*
- 6. The habitat principle: New possibilities for the well-being of nature and the diversity of species are envisaged in every design of buildings and land layouts at CA.*
- 7. The principle of authenticity: Existing natural conditions are generally better than those we can create. One should therefore nurture existing stands rather than plant new ones, and choose originally Danish species such as beech, oak, rowan, and hazel rather than imported ones (unless otherwise stated).*
- 8. The principle of variation: Establish variation throughout CA and in the design of the individual areas with both a heavily cultivated area and a 'wild corner', or by varying the care effort.”*

Figure 3. Principles for nature management designed by CFN and the gardener group. Own work, adapted and translated from CFN's website (Christianias Frie Natur, 2020).

These principles embody a respect for nature and an understanding of it not as a resource or an amusement, but as a living system which deserves care. Nonetheless, the principles leave space for a cautious and wise use of nature leading to win-win situations for the neighbours and the nature.

The combination of respect for and wise use of nature represents a perfect example of principles which are in line with an integrative worldview design, emphasising the connection between humans and nature and the possibility to create synergic solutions when working with -and not against- nature. This approach is defended by the founder of CFN, who holds a mostly integrative worldview and has been working to make people more connected to nature and their surroundings. This has been done through nature walks with biologists and ornithologists, the creation of videos explaining the functioning of the ecological system in Christiania, etc. As an example, with the help of experienced ornithologists, CFN made a survey of the birds on the lake and afterwards created a sign on the lakeside listing and illustrating them (see Figure 4):

“I also discovered when I made this [association] that the people living around the lake here, they don't know what bird's outside their window, they don't know what trees grow beside

the house. So just this bird sign you know, people come [saying] “oh, I saw this one, I had never seen it before!”. You know they're kind of opening their eyes to what we are living in the middle of. [...] So it's like I plant a seed which is growing in people's consciousness about the nature.” 13



Figure 4. Part of the bird sign located on the side of the lake, with the common names, scientific names, and illustrations of the species living in the area. Own work.

All of the above reveals a process in which a person with a deep human-nature connection in their ontology can make it spread through the establishment of certain devices. These are aimed at increasing their ecological perception first -slowly changing the ecological habitus- and their worldview afterward. Occasional problems with the neighbours who live around the lake do happen, as they may chop down unique trees without knowing or clear straws in the lake which swans and other birds use to nest. Therefore, the efforts by CFN to increase people's ecological perception do not only have impacts in how they perceive nature, but also in how they interact with it, making it easier for them to behave in ways which are in synergy with nature. This brings them also in line with the integrative worldview inspired principles explained above, a process consistent with my hypothesis.

13's integrative worldview has been a key factor in their decision to create CFN; their understanding of humanity -and thus themselves- as part of nature and deeply connected to it, allowed them to not only see but deeply feel the damage that was being done to wildlife, and triggered in them a strong will to protect it:

“At that time I had a little wild bird, a singing bird which broke its wing. [...] I took it home to see if I could get it off and he stayed in my house for 11 years. And it had bird friends out here you know, they were coming in the house, and so in a way I was a part of this bird life that was going on, you know? [...] So I think “oh but I’m a human. I have a voice, they don’t [...] And also in summer 2006 they blocked the water. So all the birds died that summer. [...] So I was going in the press, writing in the paper. I was so angry about what was going on, you know?” 13

Their process to get to this point of ecological awareness was not self-guided inner work, but instead emerged out of their experiences in Christiania with people holding worldviews where this human-nature connection is embedded:

“There have been so many spiritual people here. Like Indian medicine people, Tibetan medicine people, lamas... And all these people have also like given a piece of my state of mind about nature. They also taught me a lot about respecting, and that everything is living. [...] They also teach me how to connect with nature.” 13

Their experience demonstrates that the establishment of a space open to alternative worldviews as a political and countercultural act creates spaces where these worldviews can spread. This parallels the research made on ecovillages, which have found spaces for co-operative sociocultural experimentation as niches where uncommon worldviews can survive (Henfrey & Ford, 2018). The fact that they have linked such a central part of their worldview to Eastern philosophies and belief systems is also consistent to the historical view espoused by the IWF, which finds that countercultural spirituality inspired by those philosophies is the origin of the contemporary integrative worldview (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013a).

Recycling station

Waste management is a big issue in urban areas such as Christiania, since the high density of population causes large volumes of waste. The community deals with this through a combination of detailed recycling and composting social practices, and a culture and infrastructure of sharing and reusing second-hand objects. The prevalence of the reusing structures and practices are pushed by I1 at the recycling station.

The many types of separated waste are collected and transported to the recycling station, which is located behind the skatepark and has been running for decades now, before the practice was common in Copenhagen. Here, the different types of waste are placed into containers (Figure 5).

Most types of waste which may still be useful, such as building materials, bikes, furniture, or electronics, are left for a certain period of time before being moved to a processing station so that they can be fished out and reused by neighbours who need them, and only more hazardous types of waste are restricted from being taken.



Figure 5. Containers for different types of waste at Christiania’s recycling station. Own work.

Building materials, furniture, doors and windows are moved from there to Christiania’s self-declared “sustainable building market” (Den Grønne Genbrugshal or the Green Hall), where they are then sold at prices lower than those of new materials, in an attempt to maintain the use of the latter at a minimum.

Building materials are not the only thing that are put in the recycling station to be reused, as there are also spaces for clothes, books, cutlery, household items, and many others. They may also organise specific events for reusing, for example a clotheswap event which happened during my stay, and which was well attended. The recycling station is also by no means the only space supporting this reusing/sharing social practice: there are smaller permanent spaces scattered around the community which function on the basis of leaving what you no longer use, and taking whatever you need (Figure 6). People often also spontaneously decide to leave objects which they don’t need anymore outside their home with a note that they are for the taking, which I observed several times during my stay.



Figure 6. A free shop, where you may leave something or take whatever you need, located near Christiania's own grocery store, Indkøbscentralen. Own work.

This current emphasis in reusing materials from the recycling station was established by I1 to bring back the strong focus which the station had in the past, but which was eventually abandoned:

Then they started, back in the 70s, to sort it out, metal oh okay, glass, etc. [...] And then they were like 'what can we use this for?'. And some went down in the Green Hall, wood down there, we can sell it. You know it started way before my time. And then for many years the recycling station was called "the trasher" or "the dumpster". [...] And people didn't care. People they didn't care, you know, so when they came with the trash they just, yeah [threw it] all over the place.

[...]

"And then [I] just started to educate people when they come with the trash. [...] That was really hard for a couple of years. Yeah. Now it's really easy [...] When people came with the trash, you know, we could have a talk about it and now people know the importance about it [...] If you put stuff in the containers, the container goes away. And then five years later and a lot of CO2 later there's a new lamp [...] And it takes a long time, you know, so if you have a lamp you have a lamp, you know. Take it out of the trash, put it on the shelf, people will look at it, 'oh it's a nice lamp' yes, use it." I1

Out of their testimony we can see the process in which their worldview, which places reusing as a key part of a society being sustainable, was embedded in the practices of the recycling station, and

from there spread into the neighbour's day to day practices and worldviews too. But this is not the only aspect of their worldview which they have infused into the recycling station's practices. In making use of these structures and practices, an ethics of care is also revealed. Reusing objects is not only framed as an act of self-interest or care for nature, but also as a way to maintain good relationships with other members of the community and care for them:

"People give me the clothes that they think I would like. When there's crazy dresses or something, or weird hats or amazing things and they're like, 'oh I have this and I thought of you and I don't want it anymore, do you want it?' [...] So people take care of each other also when we reuse." I4

This framing is prevalent and is pushed by I1. The axiology aspect of their worldview (i.e., their principles for a good life) and their view for a better society both revolved around taking care of one's community, in which they explicitly included the sharing of material resources. It is therefore clear that this belief influenced the decision to frame reusing practices as an important part of having a healthy community, since it is what fits with their view of a better life in common:

"I've made up this term 'everything costs a smile' [...] this is about picking up stuff that can make another person's life nicer. It's very valuable for me, you know, I get a kick, I get dopamine out of it when I give people stuff and they get happy and satisfied and [say] 'wow I just needed this one'." I1

The above quote shows a causal chain from one individual's worldview to a social practice based on it, which spreads influencing people's interaction with each other. This is done not only through the establishment of structures and devices which make it natural to live in certain ways, but also through explaining to others face to face the importance of reusing. In other words, and relating to Wright's social transformation theory, there is subjective work as a combination of changing people's habitus (or in Wright's terms, *culture*) and trying directly to modify their worldviews (their *ideology*). This, as in the case of I3 above, is consistent with my hypothesis.

I1's backstory also can provide some interesting insight into worldview dynamics:

"I lived in Amager in a huge apartment out there, alone, very expensive. And I had this life with consumerism and [...] I was fired from a really good job, a really good position. I was fired because of the financial crisis that was going on at that point and then I rethought my whole life. And then I started to get rid of my stuff, sell it, give it away and then I pack some boxes with the most essential, what I wanted to bring with me further in my life. [...] In the

night-time right after I was fired, I was always looking for places where I could enjoy the dark. So I could see the sky and stars and stuff like that, and then I was biking around on my bike here, I came out here and I was like, 'oh but this is Christiania' [...] 'that's kind of nice! I could maybe live here'.

[...]

And also I have a spiritual connection with the wind, even though sometimes I really hate the wind. But I can also go for a walk, for example, and then I can have some deep thinking and then I'm like 'Okay am I on the right track here?' and then if it comes a blow, you know, I'm like, "okay that was the answer". I did that a lot before I moved out here and when I was biking around here, I did all this deep work with myself." 11

Their story is interesting on two counts. First, it demonstrates what happens when one's social position and the social relations around them change: it can trigger a shattering of our identity and our worldview. In their case, being pushed out of middle-high class neoliberal social relations made them reconsider the importance of consumerism. Second, it proves that having such wild spaces in a city space can help people to do deep inner work, which can in many cases lead them to rethink their ideas in a radical way (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013b). In this way, it proves that CFN's fight to maintain this area as wild as possible facilitates deconstructing neoliberal subjectivities.

6.3 How do conflicts with the state affect the space's potential for subjective work?

The character of life in Christiania is of course not only dependent on its local inner dynamics. As a space which started illegally and which is antagonised by the state, conflict with the state is a force which affects how things are done in the community in many ways. These have impacts on the potential which the space has to enact cognitive change on its inhabitants and others.

As an example, the 2012 deal which forced Christiania to buy off the land put a huge debt on the community, which has affected the way in which projects are sometimes decided upon:

"With this new structure then also came a bigger financial burden on Christiania. And there are some that they say 'well, we really need to whatever choose a project [...] that can make money' [...] I see it like if we choose projects because they make good money, the ones I've seen done with that intention have failed. I think because it's not sustainable. It's not in line with the values that this place is meant to run by, and so they're kind of doomed to fail." 12

Here we can see neoliberal profit-centred logic being integrated into the decision-making considerations of the community, decreasing the amount of emancipatory projects funded by the community if they don't make money. But on the other hand, since many of these are not in line with the community's common values, neighbours don't support them either, causing them to fail.

The Danish government keeps pressuring the community to concede more and more autonomy. Right now the decision is being made in Christiania of whether or not they will accept a new deal which has been proposed: if the community refuses to let the state build 15000 square meters of social housing flats within their territory, they will not be allowed to maintain the self-built houses which are on the parts of town they rent, and will have to clear most of the wild nature on the lakeside. This deal is a lose-lose situation in terms of potential for subjective work, as both accepting and rejecting the plan would have negative impacts. These options are treated individually below.

6.3.1 Accepting the deal: introducing unwilling newcomers

These new buildings would not only entail a massive change in the aspect of Christiania but would also prove a blow both to its unique habitus and its self-governance structure due to the large number of newcomers. To see how this would affect the establishment of new emancipatory social practices by individuals with a radical worldview, we have to look at how the influx of newcomers has already affected the ways in which many neighbours engage in common life and common projects:

“Yeah, but there used to be a lot more action days out here, where people would do stuff together and now the last couple of years there has been one for all of Christiania. [...] And now instead we're spending money in fixing the playground, which makes it more expensive to live here, and it's stuff that we could do ourselves. So that's changing a lot and quickly. [...] It's because the real activists here, they've been here for almost 50 years many of them. And they're old and they can't do that much anymore. And the younger people that moved here, they haven't really been introduced to that way of doing things. [...] It takes a lot of time to spend with somebody. To kind of [teach them] ‘this is how we need you to be to live here’. [...] If we could do that with all the people that moved in, then it would be great here.” 14

The decline in commitment to these co-operative practices have impacted its potential as an interstitial project: as it becomes closer to a “normal” Danish neighbourhood its power to inspire outsiders with its alternative social relations declines. Granted, the inhabitants of the potential social housing buildings may not have the same type of neoliberal worldview, as they would not be middle-class creatives. Yet, the new inhabitants would also not be used to the DIY ethic and the participatory

nature of decision-making, and as such it would prove extremely difficult to assimilate them into the Christiania habitus.

6.3.2 Rejecting the deal: clearing of wilderness areas

The clearing of the natural areas on the lakeside would deprive thousands of access to one of the few -if not the only- wild nature area in the centre of Copenhagen. The state's intention with clearing houses and wilderness is to bring back the fort to the state it was in originally, as a way of protecting its national cultural heritage. This was one of the main objectives of the government with the deal they signed with Christiania in 2012: to prioritise the narrative of national heritage over that of a Christiania cultural heritage defended by the inhabitants:

"[the government says] We need to get it back to how it was in sixteen hundred something. But then ten years after it didn't look like that, so what do you want to go back to historically? So I think it's [better] more just to stay dynamic. [...] When we had this talk about preservation, dynamic preservation, where you also see the layers of history." 12

We can see this attempt to tame nature on the fort ramparts as part of broader urbanization processes and politics which only take nature into account as a type of asset which is interchangeable. This we can see as a reification of a modern worldview, which threatens the efforts by CFN to expand our understanding of nature as a living being and to take it into account into our urban planning, as expressed by its founder:

"I would like the government and the people who work with the plan of the city to think nature in evolution in how they plan the city." 13

This is not only their opinion, as cities where there is a lack of wild nature or only tightly designed parks was mentioned in several of the interviews as missing the necessary physical spaces for relaxation, inner reflection, and connection to nature, echoing findings from the literature (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013b):

"I think this kind of areas of unspoiled nature are so important for human life, and for a way to connect to life, to connect to the world. And specially to live in urban settings." 12

And so I think that Christiania has given me more of the understanding about [...] how difficult and how important it is to have some wild nature in the middle of the city.

[...]

Because of the diversity of the animals, and also people can come out and just have a walk and relax [...] Connect with the inner self.” I1

Interviewees, therefore, support an alternative type of urbanisation to that embedded in the deal. They would like to see wild nature as much more present, which is fitting to the work that CFN is doing and consistent with an urban planning inspired by her integrative worldview. With the statements above, we can see that the preservation of these wild spaces, as a direct result of the establishment of CFN, has made them realise more deeply the importance of such a type of urbanism: it has caused a change in their worldview. Therefore, in eliminating these spaces of wild nature, the state is ensuring that people’s neoliberal subjectivities are more stable, crippling the transformational potential of the space. This point, in combination with I1’s story in Section 6.2.3 above, illustrates the value of staying away from excessively structural or individualistic interpretations, contributing to Aim D: wild nature spaces in Christiania facilitate the transformation of worldviews, but these spaces are the results of structures consistent with the community’s habitus and struggles for autonomy.

From both subsections above, I conclude in relation to RQ3 that the state is using diverse mechanisms which, in one way or the other hamper the transformational potential of Christiania. These embody the limits of interstitial projects as a whole; as they occupy spaces within the cracks of the state, where its relative absence allows for a certain degree of political and cultural freedom (Vasudevan, 2014b), the integration of these project into state structures -such as social housing systems or neoliberal urbanisation processes- reduce its level of autonomy and integrates them into the logic of the state.

6.4 Summary of main findings

6.4.1 Findings related to aims A, B and C

My results paint a coherent general picture of the worldview landscape in Christiania, responding to Aim A. There is a considerable mix of worldviews in the community, but also a few common values such as the centrality of life in common, which answers RQ1. This, however, is changing. The analysis following SQ1 shows that whereas collectivist and holistic worldviews were more common in its hippy beginnings, in the last couple of decades there has been a growing number of neighbours which are more individualistic and material, closer to neoliberal subjectivity. Causes of this growth include gentrification in the surrounding neighbourhood and in Christiania, which have sparked the interest of middle-class creatives.

With regards to Aim B, I found that the situation of the community as autonomous provides both advantages and barriers to establishing projects designed following an alternative worldview, in relationship to SQ2.1. On one hand, the sense of community and the co-operative habitus established in Christiania create an environment where such projects receive support from the community. This is in stark contrast to a neoliberal habitus prevalent outside the community -and supported by neoliberal social structures (Ridgeway, 2006)-, which curtails co-operative action and individual initiative to that needed for profit-driven entrepreneurship (Leyva, 2018). I deepened this insight by answering SQ2.1, where I found that the institution founder's worldviews significantly influenced their will to establish and frame social practices in specific ways. These practices were found to slowly modify the habitus in the community, and also to the worldviews of the neighbours, which is consistent with my theoretical hypothesis. On the other hand, the diversity of worldviews - including more individualistic subjectivities- causes certain divisions between groups and interests which, when included in the consensus decision-making structure adopted, can stall the establishment of emancipatory projects. However, since a consensus structure focuses on negotiation across worldview lines there is still room for them to be created, as long as the project is convincingly framed.

Finally, when focusing on Aim C I found that the relationship between individual worldviews and social practices is not only affected by processes internal to the community, but also by the different ways in which the state is trying to reduce Christiania's autonomy. The new deal the state has offered Christiania would, in one way or the other, change its potential for transforming the subjectivities of those in the community and the space's users and visitors. This would be either by establishing a large number of newcomers which are not chosen by Christiania -making it impossible to adapt all of them into the already established habitus- or by eliminating its wild nature areas, and thus its spaces for relaxation and connection to the inner self.

6.4.2 Aim D: methodological findings

The results showcase the power of integrating an inner dimensions framework into a collective social theory and theory of social transformation. Whereas performing an inner dimensions study would have produced many of the same findings, it would have missed some important points. For example, I could have identified how I1's inner work was facilitated by coming into contact with the wild nature spaces in Christiania, but the fact that these both are results of institutions and practices which try to maintain a specific habitus and sense of community would have been lost. Additionally, I would place priority to homogenisation of worldviews as the way forward to help spread new

practices, whereas the results indicate that the specific understandings of community life and the cooperative habitus that comes with it are the main processes which help new social practices take footing.

On the other hand, the inclusion of the IWF proved fruitful to understand the specific beliefs and values which motivated the establishment and framing of the institutions analysed, and to understand what triggers individuals to get involved in structures which are related to sustainability. It therefore seems like the inclusion of this framework infused the understanding of social practices in this space with much more room for individual agency than would otherwise be possible (Boda, et al., 2022).

6.5 Recommendations for future research

In investigating the worldview landscape of Christiania, this qualitative and small-sample thesis could indicate a general acceptance and diversity of worldviews, but not the specific representation of different worldviews in the space. A quantitative survey would be appropriate for this task and would give a detailed view of the composition and structures of worldviews in Christiania, as it has already been done in the Netherlands and the USA (de Witt, et al., 2016). This would help understand what specific communication strategies for sustainability issues could trigger the establishment of social practices and social movements which address climate change in a more political manner (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013a). Additionally, it would provide insight into how much of the initial hippy worldview has stayed alive, either in the same form or as integrative worldviews, by comparing their numbers to another sample outside of the community.

The expansion of this thesis' focus with addition of other institutions such as the building market, the gardener group or any of the committees would also clarify any opportunities and barriers which these institutions may pose in specific situations to adopting new social practices, which was outside the scope of this study. Finally, the replication of similar studies integrating inner dimensions into collective social theories would be welcome, especially if they are done in occupied spaces since they are so diverse that generalisable conclusions from one context may be hard to find (Pruijt, 2013).

7 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have attempted to contribute to sustainability science by bridging overly individualistic and overly structural understandings of social change and social life. To do so, I have chosen the construct of worldview as a unifying concept for inner dimensions and integrated it into a theory of social transformation which explains subjective work in the context of different collective strategies to overcome capitalism. Since occupied spaces have more freedom to establish emancipatory practices, structures, and social relations, the specific case I chose to study the interaction between individual and collective change is that of Freetown Christiania, an intentional space in Copenhagen. Christiania serves as an example of an interstitial space, as it is autonomous to a certain extent.

Results show that the extreme variety of worldviews found in this space is managed through a sense of community and a self-governance structure which give space for alternative worldviews. These can spread associated practices and integrate them into the habitus of the space. Nonetheless, there are also barriers to creating such in this space, arising from the introduction of neoliberal subjectivities and logic in the space. This is the result of changing demographics in the space and of conflicts with the state, where the state attempts to neutralise the threat of the space for imagining life in a different way. Even though the results are highly context-dependent, the sense of community and the relative autonomy experienced in this space are common to projects which have a similar interstitial strategy, and therefore the lessons learnt here may be of use to them.

As I write these final words, I hear of the news that Christiania has decided to accept the offer made by the state to introduce 15000 square meters of social housing in the area, with the negative consequences this has on the transformative potential of the space. It may seem like the state is successfully applying policies which are enclosing the freedom of this space to live differently, but as neoliberalism spreads in uneven and fragmented ways there will always cracks in which to establish or root interstitial projects such as Christiania (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Even in the case of Christiania, a famous community which attracts much negative attention from the state, there seems still to be room for creative solutions which can help the space to maintain some of its unique character. In this endless creativity in the struggle for autonomy and freedom, we can find inspiration to establish and defend projects which may, one day, lead us to a more sustainable and just world where we may live in common. As the anthem of Christiania proclaims: “I kan ikke slå os ihjel”, *you cannot kill us*.

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Annex A: Conversation guide

I'm interested in how people's deep ideas and beliefs may make them more sustainable, and how Christiania may help them achieve this. I will ask you some questions related to your life in Christiania, your vision of nature, your ideals and beliefs, and how all of these are related.

Background

I first of all just want to make you some questions about your background and your relationship with Christiania, starting from the beginning. So, could you tell me how long you have been living in Christiania and where you come from?

Why did you move to Christiania, what did this place offer you that others didn't? Is it a special place? What does Christiania or being a Christianite mean to you? Is it a place to live a good life, a social experiment, a place for those outside society etc.

What do you think has been the most important change in Christiania since its "normalisation"?

Worldview and habitus

Next, I have some questions about how you see the world, that is what deep beliefs and ideals you have and what certain fundamental concepts mean to you. For starters, I have told you that I am studying sustainability science, so what does sustainability mean to you, what characteristics must a society or a place have to be sustainable?

How would a better, (including more sustainable) society look like, what vision do you have for a better society? What do you think is the starting point to create it, how should we decide to try and solve social problems?

What role does science have to play in this transformation? Do you think science is the best way to create knowledge about the world? If not, what?

What is nature, what does it mean to you? Has your way of understanding nature been changed by living in Christiania? What position does humanity hold towards nature?

What is to be human anyway; is it special to be human?

Christiania's habitus/history

Now I want to move onto some questions about day to day life in Christiania with regards to nature and how Christiania operates in some ways. Do you think that you live in a sustainable way? (do you reuse, try to minimise waste, are involved in any sustainability politics/work?). Is this community in itself more focused on sustainability than the outside? Do you think it would be possible to take this spirit elsewhere following the laws of Danish society?

Where do you usually get your food from? What heating type does your house use? How do you move around? Do you shop a lot? Do you spend much time out in nature?

Do you think that Christiania helps you in this sense? (E.g., does it help you consume less, make it easy for you to find more local/organic food, pushes you to waste less and share more, make you understand or behave toward nature in certain ways etc.?).

- Ask about self-governance
- Ask about changing ideals