

# **Urban allotment gardens in the contemporary city**

Contested ownership arrangements and new greenspace solidarities in  
Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen

Ph.D. Thesis

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## Preface

This thesis presents the outcome of a cumulative Ph.D. project carried out at the HafenCity University Hamburg in the period from October 2015 until April 2021. The project was supervised by Professor Alexa Färber and Professor Doris Gstach. For the thesis I received a Doc.Mobility grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation which allowed me to visit the Sociology department at the University of Copenhagen from August 2017 until January 2020.

The thesis is organised in two parts: the first part puts the findings of my Ph.D. project into context in an introductory review. The second part consists of five individual papers listed below. These will be referred to in the first part by their paper numbers 1-5.

**1: Thomas N** (2020) Urbane Kleingärten im Fokus von Stadtentwicklung: Übersetzungen eines mehrschichtigen Stadtraumes. In: *Sub\urban Journal for Critical Urban Studies* 8(1): 11 – 34.

**2: Thomas N** (forthcoming) Gehen durch urbane Landschaftsräume: Die Spaziergangswissenschaft als Methode. In: Berr K and Feldhusen S (eds) *Forschungen der Landschaftsarchitekturtheorie*. Berlin: Springer Verlag, p. 1 – 16.

**3: Thomas N** (2018) Moving towards a green tomorrow. Urban Allotment Gardens and the “new green city”. In: *Journal of Communication and Language* 48: 123 – 143.

**4: Thomas N, Oehler P and Drilling M** (2016) The Power of the Many. The fight for allotment gardens in Basel, Switzerland. In: *The Nordic Journal for Architectural Research* 28(3): 97 – 117.

**5: Thomas N and Blok A.** Contested green-space solidarities? Asymmetric valuation compromises and civic-material tensions in Copenhagen allotment gardens, 1 – 25.



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## Summary

In recent years urban allotment gardens have attracted attention from urban researchers and policy makers alike. In this context the praising of allotments' green and civic values co-exists with growing tendencies to privatise and re-develop urban gardens located in cities. This thesis aims to explore this contradicting evaluation and the struggle of urban allotment gardens to remain part of the contemporary sustainable city, which I connect with allotment gardens' ownership arrangements. With the land publicly owned and rented out to gardening associations and affiliated private individuals, allotment gardens embed an inherent ambiguity regarding the civic status of the spaces.

I explore these aspects through a comparative qualitative analysis of allotment gardens' contestations and re-negotiations in Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen in the past 10-20 years. In this time period, allotment gardens as civic-public urban greenspaces were increasingly disputed while paradoxically the cities turned "green": in the late 1990s in Copenhagen, the green flagship project of the new city metro resulted in the closure and redevelopment of several allotment garden sites. In the early 2010s, in the name of social sustainability and a response to growing housing shortage, both cities of Basel and Hamburg published plans to create new housing on allotment garden sites. Thus, in all three cases, in the name of sustainable city planning, urban allotment gardens were to be integrated into the city in new ways, different values were to be realised in the name of the common good, and the green and social structures were to be removed. This resulted in the future of the gardens and its civic worth being contested.

Reading across different literatures, but with a focus on French pragmatist scholars Boltanski and Thévenot and an emerging pragmatic sociology of urbanism, I explore the cases' contestations as valuation conflicts. I thereby show how allotment gardens sit at the intersections between different civic, green and financial worths. The contestation efforts, I argue, required acts of translating worth, whereby allotment gardeners translated their personal attachments into common good justifications. These translations emphasised and depended on different worths, democratic practices and solidarities, which co-exist within allotment gardens. Thus civic-public compromises could be achieved.

The thesis analyses the conditions and consequences of the compromises and retraces how alternative visions of social sustainability are being pushed out by green-material interventions, and how new conflicts emerge amongst allotment gardeners and public stakeholders as a result.

I conclude that allotment gardens continue to be a battleground between different visions of sustainability and civic solidarities.

## Zusammenfassung

In den vergangenen Jahren sind urbane Kleingärten zunehmend in den Fokus von Stadtforschung und Stadtpolitik gerückt. In diesem Zusammenhang werden Kleingärten für ihre grünen und gemeinschaftlichen Werte gelobt, zugleich aber auch privatisiert und von Bauprojekten verdrängt.

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht diese widersprüchlichen Bewertungsprozesse und die umkämpfte Rolle von urbanen Kleingärten in der nachhaltigen Stadt und bringt diese mit den Besitzstrukturen von Kleingärten in einen Zusammenhang. Kleingärten befinden sich meist auf öffentlichem Land, welches an Kleingartenvereine und ihre Mitglieder verpachtet wird, wodurch ihr Status als Allgemeingut nicht eindeutig verortbar ist.

Diese komplexen Wechselbeziehungen erforsche ich anhand einer vergleichenden qualitativen Untersuchung zu umkämpften und neu verhandelten urbanen Kleingärten in Basel, Hamburg und Kopenhagen der letzten zehn bis 20 Jahre. Während in diesem Zeitraum alle drei Städte sich zunehmend an dem Ziel einer nachhaltigen Stadtpolitik orientierten, wurden Kleingärten verdrängt. So führte in Kopenhagen die neu errichtete Metroverbindung als grünes Pionierprojekt zur Verdrängung von zahlreichen Kleingartenarealen; in Basel und Hamburg reagierte Planung und Politik Anfang der 2010er Jahre auf die zunehmende Wohnproblematik mit neuen Wohnprojektideen, die auf Kleingartenflächen realisiert werden sollten. In allen drei Städten sollten demnach im Namen von nachhaltiger Stadtplanung Kleingärten einer neuer Nutzungsform zugeführt und die grünen und sozialen Strukturen verdrängt werden. Dies führte zu intensiven Aushandlungsprozessen um die Zukunft von Kleingärten und die Wertigkeit der Flächen.

Theoretisch verorte ich die Dissertation innerhalb einer pragmatischen Soziologie des Urbanismus, basierend auf Luc Boltanski und Laurent Thévenot. Darauf aufbauend, untersuche ich die Aushandlungsprozesse der drei Fälle als (Be-)Wertungskonflikte und zeige auf, wie sich innerhalb von Kleingärten soziale, grüne und finanzielle Werte überschneiden. Während der Aushandlungsprozesse übersetzten Kleingärtner\_innen den Mehrwert ihrer persönlichen Bezüge für eine Allgemeinheit mittels unterschiedlicher Strategien, basierend auf ko-existierenden Werteressourcen, demokratischen Praktiken und Solidaritäten. Diese führten dazu, dass ein Kompromiss erzielt werden konnte. Die Dissertation zeigt die Bedingungen und Konsequenzen der Kompromisse auf und analysiert, wie neue grün-materielle Interventionen alternative Visionen von sozialer Nachhaltigkeit verdrängen und dadurch neue Konflikte im Umfeld von Kleingärten und städtischen Akteur\_innen entstehen. Ich schlussfolgere daraus, dass urbane Kleingärten Schauplätze sind, an denen Spannungen zwischen verschiedenen Vision von Nachhaltigkeit und zivilgesellschaftlicher Solidarität ausgetragen werden.

## Acknowledgements

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# **PART 1**

Urban allotment gardens in the contemporary city –  
Contested ownership arrangements and new greenspace  
solidarities in Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The complicated relevance of urban allotment gardens

In February 2018, the allotment garden association “Dreisplitz” in the Swiss city of Basel held its annual association meeting. What usually is a friendly communal evening, where food is eaten together and new rules are decided on per vote, was going to be different that year: the administrative head of the municipal park and recreation department, Mr E, was present to inform the gardeners about the redevelopment plans determining their future. Around 80 gardeners’ eyes nervously watched as the elegantly dressed Mr E walked to the front of the room, opened up his laptop, and projected various architectural visualisations onto the wall that the planning department was currently working on. This was not new to the gardeners, who knew that their relatively small allotment site was going to be redeveloped in a few years as part of an agreed compromise between municipal stakeholders and the city’s civic gardening representatives. The gardeners listened while Mr E talked them through various planning stages, until finally he delivered the message that he had come for: all gardeners were to leave in 2021 latest due to technical efficiency, even those plots located in the site’s periphery that had been promised to stay five years longer. The room was silent at first, shocked. Then noises of anger started surging across the room. “How could you tell us that we could stay until 2025? How could you make this promise to us?” one woman demanded to know. Another man got up and shouted: “I know where this will lead to, you will kick us off the land, and then nothing will happen, nothing! There will be no constructions, and our gardens will be buried in weeds, this is what will happen!”<sup>1</sup>

This meeting, which I attended and observed, became somewhat of a watershed moment for me: it demonstrated not only differences in the ways the civic gardeners and the attending public official engaged with the space and how responsible gardeners felt for the state of green materiality on their plots. It also showed how the civic-public compromise the gardeners themselves had agreed to, was leading to new tensions and emerging conflicts.

Scenes like the one described above have taken place in many cities in Europe in the past few years. With planning taking a “participatory turn” and cities increasingly employing a “liberal grammar” (Thévenot 2011), citizens are involved in planning processes and civic and public actors are shaping planning processes together in new, frequently conflicting ways. These new pathways are an attempt to find solutions to 21<sup>st</sup> century urban challenges, where cities are expected to facilitate urban developments that are ecologically, socially *and* economically sustainable.

The problems of these demands reveal itself in stark ways when it comes to urban greenspaces in general and urban allotment gardens in particular. In the past years, scholars and policy makers alike have spoken of urban gardening’s renaissance. Urban gardening has been linked to the sustainable, participatory city, described as promoting new forms of do-it-

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<sup>1</sup> The quotes were translated from German into English and have been slightly modified to allow for a better understanding.

yourself and grassroots urbanism that contribute to urban resilience in the contemporary city (see e.g. Kumnig et al. 2017; Certomà et al. 2019). Yet tensions between civic gardeners and public landowners frequently shape these particular urban greenspaces, with questions of long-term rights overshadowing many activities. Allotment gardens, as long-standing urban greenspaces, therefore face contradictions: they are on the one hand valued for their green and civic values, but on the other hand frequently re-developed. When it comes to urban gardens, policy makers and planners are unsure which role these spaces shall fulfil in the 21<sup>st</sup> century city in the long run, and how to evaluate and respond to the multiple potential worths of these spaces, leading to questions of distribution and solidarity.

Interest in how the contemporary sustainable city in liberal democracies can be organised, how urban planning in its current regime can or cannot address valuation tensions and contradiction, was the starting point of my Ph.D. thesis. To study this in more detail, I chose three different allotment garden contestation sites in the cities of Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen. In all of these cases, allotment gardens have undergone significant transformations in the past 10-20 years, and the spaces' worth and ownership arrangements have been debated and re-negotiated between various civic and public actors. The question of solidarity, of who should have access to the spaces and for which reasons, led to city-wide debates and to compromises being agreed upon. And yet, like the field observations of the "Dreisplitz" association meeting illustrate, the compromises have not resolved the issue of competing worths and ways of engaging with space. This thesis therefore attempts to capture both the case studies' re-negotiations of the past 10-20 years, as well as new valuation tensions and questions of solidarities currently emerging in all cases. I aim to connect these with the cities' turn towards sustainability politics as a new planning framework, providing finer-grained insight into why allotment gardens have become such a contested object throughout Europe in recent years, as well as exploring the dynamic and shifting role of civic actors in contemporary urban greenspace arrangements and planning processes.

## **1.2. Research question**

This Ph.D. project studied the contestation of planned allotment garden redevelopments and the resulting re-evaluation as a common good in Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen. As it is an empirical study, I chose the case studies for being, to a degree, "extreme cases" (Flyvbjerg 2006), where the re-evaluation is resulting in new tensions of market, civic and green worths related to the compromise settings. My aim was to connect the question of process participation and who contested the redevelopments and with which common good arguments, with the question of unjust civic-material outcomes and consequences.

The overarching research question guiding the study was: *How are long-standing civic-public ownership arrangements between municipalities, allotment gardeners and associations being re-arranged and re-negotiated in the context of wider urban greenspace transformations in the sustainable city and which new lines of civic inclusions and exclusions are thereby drawn?*

### **1.3. Thesis structure**

To answer the research question, this thesis first presents the background, methodology and theoretical framework of this Ph.D. project in chapter 2-4, before outlining and concluding the results connecting all cases in chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 2 describes the current state of research within which this study is situated: it spans a field between transdisciplinary research exploring the participatory turn of urban planning, urban greenspaces and urban gardens in the context of city planning and brings finer-grained pragmatic research on spatial valuations into a dialogue with more macro-scaled political ecology research.

In Chapter 3, I outline the thesis' theoretical framework of an emerging pragmatic sociology of urbanism, providing a lens and vocabulary for studying contestations between different ways of engaging with urban space.

Chapter 4 elaborates on the methodological approach of this thesis as well as the methods applied and data generated, discussing challenges and limitations of the chosen approach.

Chapter 5 gives a summary of the individual papers of this cumulative thesis, before presenting an analytical comparison of the cases and the results regarding allotment gardens' ownership arrangements, the link between the redevelopment projects and sustainable city politics, the process of contestation and compromise, and new civic exclusions associated with it.

I conclude on the research question in chapter 6, presenting an outlook and my analytical category "ownership feelings" as a potential new way of exploring urban greenspace contestations and civic responses to contemporary urban transformations.

## 2. Literature Review

The recent years have seen an increase in scholars exploring the shift of urban greenspace politics and how this is situated within a wider turn of post-industrial cities towards sustainability discourses and goals as a planning framework (Wachsmuth and Angelo 2018). Urban greenspaces refer to the material outcome of various current “urban greening” activities which according to Angelo (2019: 2), aim to “improve urban public health and make cities more liveable through green space”. Those initiatives can include place-based strategies such as creating new public parks on former industrial sites, street trees, green roofs, or creating bike infrastructure. It can also refer to strategies without a spatial boundary, such as energy initiatives or climate adaptation infrastructure (see e.g. Stokman 2008; Madsen et al. 2019). Large-scale greening developments are accompanied by smaller-scale civic-greenspace activities, such as food collectives or community parks, that are bringing forward not only new material practices, but also new urban landscapes marked by different degrees of cooperation and contestation between municipal authorities and civic activists (see Gstach 2015; Hauck et al. 2017; Laage-Thomsen and Blok 2020b).

Urban gardens occupy different spaces within these developments and are morally evaluated and integrated into the “sustainable city” in conflicting ways: by being redeveloped in the context of new sustainability projects such as housing or transportation for instance, or by recognising and protecting its green and civic values.

Becoming aware of the contradictions behind sustainable urban planning, an increasing number of scholars are beginning to question the naturalised assumption that greening initiatives are inherently good and of value, and have drawn attention to conflicts and civic consequences of urban greening interventions undertaken in the name of sustainability politics.

In this chapter I present an overview of research exploring new urban greenspace conflicts coming from two different theoretical angles: critical urban research that approaches urban greenspace development from a Marxist perspective and focuses on social consequences, asking about socio-ecological (in)justices. To this I add pragmatic urban research from a Scandinavian context focusing less on consequences and more on questions of negotiations and mediations between different valuation positions. Even though I situate my research within the pragmatic research tradition (more on this in the next chapter), I aim to bring both research strands closer to each other, since I agree with Angelo (2019) that both lenses have its strengths and can contribute to each other’s perspectives.

## 2.1. Critical urban perspectives: Rising green inequalities

A growing body of critical urban researchers argue that current urban greenspace transformations express and reproduce existing inequalities and power struggles in society in the name of sustainability (e.g. Heynen et al. 2006; Swyngedouw 2009).

Within this body of research, I identify two different strands: the first research strand points out the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and environmental disadvantages along the lines of social coordinates such as class and race. For example, research from the US shows that marginalised groups are frequently more exposed to harmful ecological practices in proximity to their homes, and clean-ups in these areas take much longer, if they happen at all (Eckerd and Keeler 2012). Others claim that there are also significant equity issues regarding access to green spaces, with e.g. Kabisch and Haase (2014) and Loughran (2016) arguing that celebrated new participatory urban greenspaces like Tempelhofer Feld in Berlin and New York's High Line are valued overwhelmingly amongst cultural middle-classes and fail to address or recognise more marginalised groups' culturally framed needs. Researchers from this group therefore claim that more sensitive public green interventions within marginalised and deprived communities are needed, supporting the livelihoods of deprived communities.

The second strand approaches greening initiatives as practices that frequently increase social exclusions and injustices. They show how developments branded as "sustainable", such as new park creations, can lead to rising housing costs and property values, pushing out deprived groups who were supposed to benefit from the newly greened neighbourhoods (see Angelovski et al. 2018; Wolch et al. 2014). Various case-study research, based mostly on European and North American contexts and on large-cities, have connected sustainable branded planning agendas with ongoing urban displacement processes, calling out what they criticise as processes of "ecological gentrification" (Dooling 2009) or "environmental gentrification" (Pearsall 2010). In this context, scholars approaching new greening initiatives with a focus on the social outcome, argue that development projects branded as being sustainable in fact appropriate discourses of justice in order to "greenwash" the economic motives driving the development (Checker 2011; García-Lamarca et al. 2019). Findings from this research strand make addressing the first strand more complex, because they reveal the intersections between forms of exclusions and that more research is needed to better understand the relationship between green values and economic values.

Though most of the studies from the second strand will discuss macro-questions of urban politics, some nonetheless give interesting insights into spatial conflicts and appropriation happening below this scale "on the ground". Dooling's (2009), Checker's (2011) and Mitchell's (1995) studies, for instance, look at how new regeneration policies and greenspace transformations result in the displacement of marginalised groups. Mitchell's famous study of People's park in Berkeley, California, addresses social justice questions related to new greening initiatives over 20 years ago. More recently, Dooling and Checker explore how greening interventions impact local neighbourhoods, studying the impacts along the lines of class and between the more marginal "old-timers" and the wealthier "new-comers". Dooling

describes how Seattle's new urban greenspace governance and new civic-municipal planning initiatives negatively affects homeless people, who are discouraged from using urban greenspaces for sleeping or dwelling purposes as they have been accustomed to doing. Checker (2011) identifies the socio-cultural effects of municipal eco-housing developments in Harlem, New York. There, the new eco-branded housing developments brought more affluent, middle-class residents to Harlem and caused deeper conflicts over the use of urban greenspace between "old-timers" and "new-comers", with the latter enforcing park rules and a change of what previously were accepted activities of importance for the community. In the tradition of political ecology, Checker and Dooling's research takes a normative standpoint, describing the spatial engagements of the resource-low "old-timers" as having no legal ownership stake and being oppressed<sup>2</sup>.

Both Checker and Dooling write about the strong attachments their studied groups (the homeless in Seattle, the local income-poor, ethnically diverse residents in Harlem) have with the urban greenspace; the activities and practices resulting from these attachments are, however, transformed by the more affluent, middle-class newcomers' desired kind of engagement with the space and which are supported by the regeneration developments. Considering these social consequences of large-scale sustainability projects and how they reproduce structural inequalities, critical urban researchers are increasingly calling for social-ecological justice (Grossman et al., under review), to ensure that cities' green sustainability initiatives do not lead to new civic exclusions.

## **2.2. Pragmatic urban perspectives: Greenspace valuations**

Unlike political-ecological research, pragmatist urban research explores greening conflicts through a more pluralistic focus on tensions, asymmetries and compromises amongst different spatial values and different spatial engagements. Researchers do not assume only one notion of justice exists, but argue different ways of engaging and valuing spaces, not necessarily distinguished by socio-economic backgrounds, are continuously re-negotiated during urban greening conflicts. Pragmatic research into greening conflict is interested in how different

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<sup>2</sup> In the context of spatial oppression, an increasing number of critical urban researchers are asking whether the notion of "right to the city" that dominated the urban discourse in the 2000s and early 2010s (see Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer 2012; Purcell 2002) is in fact helpful in overcoming spatial oppression regimes. Instead, they refer to spatial concepts emphasising relational spatial aspects or communal ownership (see Blomley 2004; Gray and Porter 2015) in an aim to "de-centre" the question of rights and responsibility, giving more attention to the various forms of spatial attachments and its interconnections.

Coming from a different tradition, the notion of "care" in feminist research has a similar goal by drawing attention to usually overlooked relations of (spatial) care and its political implications that a growing number of researchers are exploring related specifically to environmental care (see e.g. De la Bellacasa 2017; Fitz and Krasny 2019). In recent years, a number of transdisciplinary researchers have turned their attention towards overlooked urban ecologies such as weeds or urban wastelands, which they argue provides a new lens for thinking about spatial relations and the city (see Gandy and Jasper 2020; Stoetzer 2018; DeSilvey 2017). These interesting methods to explore the interconnections between urban ecologies and urban civics are novel approaches that aim to go beyond existing binary concepts such as culture / nature, human / non-human.

spatial engagements are negotiated and contested, for instance in various new “arenas”<sup>3</sup> such as planning participation events.

Holden and Scerri (2015) and Holden et al. (2015), for example, explore valuation conflicts surrounding large-scale waterfront redevelopment projects in Vancouver and Melbourne and the developed compromises in detail by tracing how wider civic actors both contested against as well as participated in the redevelopment. Describing the different ways the redevelopment space was valued and approached, they found that market values and the profit that could be generated from selling the land were the original projects’ driving motor, but that civic protest voiced alternative ideas of spatial value and what constituted a good life in the city. Unexpected compromises resulted from this: they found stakeholders with market-based positions would in certain moments support green or civic interests, leading, in the case of Melbourne, to compromises such as a stronger civic participation in the planning process and an increase of social infrastructure, such as a library, childcare centre and public spaces. Holden et al. thus identify the new redevelopments as containing moments of oppression, but also new opportunities for coordination and compromise.

Research in the Scandinavian context conducted by Eranti (2017), Metzger et al. (2017) and Blok and Meilvang (2015) study redevelopment conflicts as negotiations of values and different spatial engagements. All three studies explore different empirical cases: Eranti studies the public letters sent to local authorities following the publication of two greenfield developments in Finland and explores which justifications against the project were put forward, thereby analysing how protesters ascribed different argumentative worth to nature. Metzger et al. research the civic-municipal greening and redevelopment projects of two former harbour areas in Gothenburg; Blok and Meilvang look at the Nordhavn waterfront redevelopment in Copenhagen. Despite the different cases, their findings are similar: they all express the multiplicity of ways these greenspaces are valued by different actors and the tensions that arise if different civic spatial attachments are threatened by redevelopment projects, and how this threat leads to different defensive arguments.

In this context, Blok and Meilvang provide interesting insights into how Copenhagen’s sustainable city policy provided a framework for activists to link their contestation to and give their private attachments a public rhetoric. They also describe how the activists’ personal attachments were based on feelings that were hard to verbalise, requiring them to engage with “creative moral work” (2015: 33) to describe their attachment in such a way as to be linkable to the municipality’s engagement with the space and justify their demands. One activist, for instance, engaged with the space’s green value by trying to prove the existence of green toads, a protected species. Others used pictures of wildlife or other visual formats to try and build what Blok and Meilvang call new forms of communality.

All three studies show the close connection between the spaces’ green values and the activists’ attachment to these spaces. To “aggrandize” (Thévenot 2014) these personal attachments, different arguments and tools ranging from visual documentation, written letters

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<sup>3</sup> I repeatedly refer to “arenas” throughout this thesis, to describe situations where spatial engagements are debated or contested between public and civic actors in the course of, for instance, planned participation events. It emphasises the material and immaterial spaces of debates surrounding different forms of spatial engagement (discussed further in chapter 3.2.).

and verbal statements during participation meetings were drawn upon, documenting conflicts between the municipality's and the civics' spatial engagements.

Despite the different lenses, critical and pragmatist studies mentioned in this section have one thing in common: they all explore ambiguities or contradictions related to urban greening interventions, be it between different sustainability visions on a macro-scale, or the more micro and meso level of spatial engagements, thus pointing out the political nature of green interventions.

Both approaches focus on contestations over urban (green) space in different ways, demanding more legitimacy and understanding for personal attachments to urban ecologies in the context of large-scale redevelopments: critical urban researchers by drawing attention to the spatial engagement of marginalised groups (discussed as appropriated or dominated by powerful stakeholders and interests), and pragmatist urban researchers highlighting the spatial engagement of activists or participators of planning processes (who are understood to be in an asymmetric relationship with planners and politicians, but discussed as having valuation impact).

### **2.3. Planning perspectives: New civic participation**

The sustainability-turn of cities in liberal democracies since the 1990s has been accompanied by planning regime changes in the past 40 years (Meilvang et al. 2018). Scholars studying this shift speak of urban planning's communicative, participatory or collaborative turn (Healey 1997; Forester 1999) to describe how planning processes are integrating citizens in new ways, thereby responding to critique of former technocratic regimes.

Technocratic planning describes a regime where planning is conducted by technocratic experts on behalf of the wider civic, under frameworks that are negotiated and decided by elected politicians. This regime, too, involves civic communication and civic participation, but in a different form: planners speak on behalf of the people rather than people speaking on behalf of themselves. However, as Silver et al. (2010) emphasise, participatory planning has not simply replaced technocratic planning, rather both forms co-exist today.

These changes reflect wider shifts within Western political regimes, where traditional forms of democratic representation based on representation through elected mandates are increasingly accompanied by participatory forms, where public policy dialogue, debates and decision-making happen outside of traditional political arenas and with the direct involvement of citizens (see Silver et al. 2010); policies are no longer generated by technocrats and politicians alone, but incorporate elements of civic-public dialogue.

To date, this participatory turn has attracted attention from urban researchers exploring civic participation in urban planning from various theoretical angles. Scholars usually apply either a Habermasian, Foucaultian or Marxist lens (for an overview see Lane 2005; Meilvang et al. 2018), that impacts their position towards what they either perceive as creating new opportunities for making planning policies more inclusive or as strengthening exclusions.

Healey (1997), an advocate of participatory planning, is perhaps the best-known scholar of a Habermasian approach. She discusses the regime change as being the inevitable result of an increasing fragmentation of society and urban regions. Diverging interests and positions have made the development and implementation of one coherent spatial strategy more and more difficult, she argues. Technocratic planning processes are therefore unable to provide the ideas and solutions needed in such a fragmented society, where multiple spatial engagements are frequently in conflict with each other and require collective negotiations. It is only through what she calls new “inclusionary argumentation” (1996: 219) between civil society and public authorities that some kind of consensus around a planning strategy can be achieved.

German planning theorist Selle (1996, 2010) also belongs to this group. He too emphasises the potential of participation and communicative rationality leading to planning consensus amongst diverging interests and groups, but also highlights the need to coordinate and overlook the complex and intransparent process to ensure an inclusive outcome.

The second, Foucauldian group argues that planning processes are conflictual and that consensus cannot be achieved (e.g. Flyvbjerg 2002; Pløger 2004). They, however, see conflict not as a sign of planning failure, but rather as a fundamental part of participatory planning processes. The question is therefore not how to avoid it, but rather how to integrate it into processes in new, constructive ways to ensure planning continuation.

The third, Marxist group is the one most fundamentally opposed to participation, claiming that participation processes reproduce existing inequalities, and emphasising its democratic shortcomings (e.g. Swyngedouw et al. 2002).

All of these approaches towards planning and participation illustrate how widely the participatory turn is debated, with positions differing between those who see participation as creating new opportunities that can help planning become more inclusive and “just” (Fainstain 2010), and those who argue it presents new opportunities for exclusion and its legitimisation.

A fourth group of researchers, from the field of urban anthropology, among them Abram and Weszkalnys (2011, 2013) and Färber (2012, 2019), cuts across these groups, providing a deeper, more extensive understanding of the role of planning in contemporary culture and society. Abram and Weszkalnys (2011) are especially interested in the changes of the temporality of planning, discussing the role of planning in societies where planning failures and negative temporalities are common and “elusive promises” of new valuation orders prone to critique and contestations. Färber urges to take a look beyond established ways of seeing and understanding urban transformations along the lines of class or ethnic categories, identifying the city as a space where new urban assemblages between actors, materialities and plural promises of the good city unfold. Civic participation in this context provides new arenas and opportunities where civic and public actors can learn about each other’s spatial engagements in new ways (Silver et al. 2010; McFarlane 2011), leading to new participation formats (Meilvang et al. 2018).

An interesting development within the field of urban anthropology is the increasing reflection of the role of researchers in studying the transformation of planning cultures, especially when it comes to their research involvement in concrete projects. In this context, researchers’ role and responsibility in pointing out spatial oppressions and the complex relationship between

spatial engagements of planners and civic groups have been emphasised (see Lange and Müller 2016 for discussions on the role of anthropology in contemporary urban research). These discussions regarding the responsibility and engagement of researchers are developed further in new research practices involving civic participants in new ways. One example for this is the CityScienceLab at HafenCity University, where researchers, students and citizens together create new urban knowledge and solutions, thus challenging and extending conventional researching roles.

Within the pragmatist school, research on civic participation considers the researchers' engagement with the field far less – a likely reflection of different methodological approaches and less intensive field stays. It tends to focus instead on how various actors or instruments can or cannot connect different forms of spatial engagements, and thus for instance pays attention to visual tools that translate spatial attachments (Blok and Meilvang 2015) or “composition devices” (Meilvang et al. 2018: 37) which “serve to co-condition not one but several urban engagements and commonalities within the same, non-coherent political space”. Pragmatic researchers argue that present-day planning regimes in liberal democracies rely on citizens as a liberal public of (self-)interested stakeholders who are expected to take part in working out viable options and understandings of what constitutes a good life in the city; yet they (e.g. Meilvang et al. 2018) also emphasise that these processes happen within societies, where market worth dominates and frequently oppresses civic spatial needs. Thus, both tendencies, civic liberation and oppression within present-day planning regimes, co-exist.

In sum, various examples illustrate the wide range of research studying changes in the way urban planning is conducted and governed in liberal post-industrial cities. I position this study within the fourth group of “ambiguous researchers”, who argue that civic participation can both strengthen democracy, inclusion and consensus-building, but it can also lead to conflicts of interests through new arenas and supporting neoliberal exclusions. I therefore agree with Silver et al. (2010) that civic participation can contain both contestation and critique as well as participation and support, representing “moments” in the political process rather than its defining characteristics.

The fact that participatory and technocratic planning not only co-exist, but are increasingly becoming intermingled, presents new challenges for both public authorities and civic actors involved. This is due to the circumstance that both are based on different democratic traditions and understandings of what constitutes fair collective decision-making.

How these conflicts play out in the field of urban allotment gardens which constitute long standing civic-municipal greenspaces, as well as in its newer form of community garden is discussed in the next section by presenting an overview over existing research.

## **2.4. Urban gardens in the sustainable city: Opportunities and challenges**

A number of studies in the recent years have explored urban gardening in the context of city planning and greenspace governance, spanning a wide field of perspectives from cultural and sociological to planning and architectural ones.

This interest is not only related to the growth of gardening and agricultural initiatives, but also due to urban gardening spaces being somewhat of a critical object revealing opportunities and challenges related to the sustainable city and civic participation. In this chapter I give an overview over studies exploring specifically allotment gardens, followed by research on urban greenspaces that focus on tensions and challenges related to civic-public greenspace collaborations. It is within this field – and its gaps – that I situate this thesis.

### ***2.4.1. Ambiguous space: Allotment gardens as a research object***

Allotment gardens are a long-standing urban phenomenon with ties to the industrial city (Keshavarz and Bell 2016); its institutionalised structure dates back to the rise of social democracy at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which demanded workers and their families have access to gardens for health and educational purposes (see e.g. Exner and Schützenberger 2018 for Vienna; Thorsen et al. 1988 for Copenhagen).

Current research on allotment gardens explores the phenomenon from different lenses that tend to fall into three groups. The first group approaches gardens from a cultural-historical lens, connecting them to socialist reforms and the rising influence of the industrial working class (Crouch and Ward 1988) as well as the rise of national identities, with Tilley (2008) arguing that collective national identities are to this day performed and mediated in allotment garden sites.

The second group approaches them from a social-political perspective and emphasises the social role of allotment gardens related to societal change such as labour market transformation and migration patterns. In this context, allotment gardens are discussed as important leisurely and recreational spaces as well as spaces of cultural integration (see Gallati and Schiller 2011; Müller 2002; Appel and Spitthöver 2011).

The third group, approaching allotment gardens from a planning perspective, is of particular relevance for this research. Their studies will often include comparisons with newer community gardens to work out the relationship between allotment gardens and urban planning in more detail and how it frequently results in eventual displacement (Spilková and Vágner 2016). Exner and Schützenberger (2018) for instance describe Vienna's allotment gardens as Fordist remnants characterised by a different material culture and social composition than community gardens. They describe various differences, such as the garden sites being fenced in, the gardeners having their own individual plot with huts located on top, and the gardeners' lower socio-economic resources. In a similar vein, Oehler et al. (2018) show how allotment gardeners in Switzerland engage in boundary drawing to set their perceived gardening practice and association structures apart from newer community garden forms, with allotment gardeners describing new community gardens as aesthetically and

civically disordered; Tappert et al. (2018) find that the Swiss planning policy discourse paint community gardens as progressive new urban greenspaces to be supported and included into cities' planning strategies, while allotment gardens are problematised and discussed as an overcome model.

Research by DeSilvey (2003) and Lawson (2004) provides interesting insights into the complicated relationship between allotment gardens and urban planning in particular. They argue that the fact that allotment gardens are connected to a wide variety of values and practices – that plots can be valued for the food support, recreational value, educational value and more – and that they neither fit categories of public or private space, partly explain this complicated relationship. Lawson (2004: 151) writes that even though planners praise allotment gardens' environmental and social values, they generally do not include them in long-range planning strategies because they understand them as a “private resource”. DeSilvey identifies the cultural multiplicity and gardeners' difficulty of translating their personal attachments into common arguments that would justify a special protection as the reasons for her Scottish case-study's marginality, with many gardeners resorting to the ideology and language of sustainability in an attempt to translate the public value of their private gardening activities.

Research on urban allotment gardens in relation to urban planning thus emphasises the gardens' problematised and threatened position in the contemporary city. How the institutional ownership arrangements between associations and municipal landowners informs the relationship and how this might relate to shifting greenspace solidarities has so far not been researched related explicitly to allotment gardens. In order to study the question further, I now turn towards research on contemporary civic-municipal greenspaces in general, including new community gardens, where these aspects have attracted more attention.

#### ***2.4.2. Urban gardens: Civic-municipal urban greenspaces***

Research looking into contemporary civic-municipal greenspace partnerships is helpful for contextualising the situation of allotment gardens, as it gives insights into the operational mechanisms of civic-public greenspaces in general. This is the case, I argue, because both types of urban gardens share two fundamental characteristics.

Firstly, the fact that they are usually located on public land without tenure security allows civic actors to access these spaces they would usually not be able to access through the regular real estate market, resulting in a somewhat hybrid ownership: while the land is rented, any material objects and plants located on the land belong to the gardeners themselves. Only few researchers (e.g. Hauck et al. 2017) explicitly comment on this ownership structure and its subsidised character. Secondly, they represent civic-municipal partnerships insofar as the land subsidisation comes with civic actors investing their personal labour and time to develop the greenspace, without this being financially compensated or without gardeners usually having an official decision-making-stake in the partnership. Several researchers have pointed out the asymmetry of these relationships (for German community garden partnerships see e.g. Ernwein 2017; Kumnig 2017). Rosol (2010) therefore criticises new civic-municipal greenspaces as being fundamentally a neoliberal outsourcing of municipalities' responsibility

to provide and manage urban greenspaces, to citizens who provide free labour; I argue this happens partly in exchange for creating spatial attachments, which Rosol pays little attention to.<sup>4</sup> Political-ecologist Haskaj (2020), too, emphasises the spatial care and labour value associated with urban gardens; he refers to North American allotment gardeners' "conspicuous labour" and describes how in the long run, these generated green values get appropriated and pushed out by market values.

The question of how these partnerships therefore unfold over time is of crucial importance and shows how urban gardens are often compromises between different orders of worth, as Boltanski and Thévenot (2006, described in more detail in the next chapter) call it: the land is rented out below market values, but in exchange for the growth of green values. Gardeners are allowed to take care of the land, but without having any long-term tenure security – the municipalities as landowners have the authority to decide long-term goals regarding the land. These valuation compromises between municipalities and civic gardeners result in various tensions which I will describe in more detail now, based on existing research.

### ***Domestic values***

Both community and allotment gardens come with a set of rules imposed on them by the municipal landowner. Different research shows how these rules cause tensions between the spatial engagement of gardeners and owners and are therefore continuously re-negotiated and mediated by various different means. Hilbrandt (2017) for example explores allotment sites in Berlin as spaces where the regulatory framework that forbids allotments to be used for permanent dwelling purposes were continuously negotiated and mediated in the gardeners' everyday life, something Christensen (2020) found, too, was the case with civic participants in a greening-initiative in Varde, Denmark. Laage-Thomsen and Blok (2020a) describe the tensions it caused when Copenhagen municipality demanded a community garden initiative to sign an official rental and operations contract with the municipality that forbade them to plant perennials, including trees. In all cases, the compromises were continuously negotiated: in Varde, one coordinator with good connections to the local government found ways to link legal responsibility, such as the need to apply for building permissions, with civilians' more informal engagements and thus helped to convey to participants "the *feeling* that they are the responsible caretakers and managers [...], on their own terms" (2020: 494) [added emphasis]. In Copenhagen, meanwhile, a compromise was found by allowing perennials to be planted in flexible raised beds to keep them separated from the permanent ground. All compromises provided the civic participants with opportunities to engage with the space in their desired ways without impacting the municipality's legal responsibility. Thus various forms of spatial engagement could be coordinated with each other.

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<sup>4</sup> In very recent years, scholars have begun to see changes in the relationship asymmetry, with for instance Wegener al. 2020 describing German partnerships between civic garden groups and city municipalities as increasingly equal, where gardeners are given new authority and included into decision making processes. Researchers supportive of participatory planning applaud this development, whereas critical urban researchers point out the democratic deficit associated with unelected civic groups receiving new opportunities to determine the development of public spaces (see McClintock 2014).

### ***Civic values***

Research specifically on community gardens explores and discusses them as spaces of civic virtue that actually or potentially enhance social cohesion and create a sense of civic home (e.g. Veen et al. 2015), or as spaces that (re-)generate social capital (e.g. Firth et al. 2011).

Building up on this, several scholars (Certomà et al. 2019; Eizenberg 2012, 2013; Rosol 2010, 2012) discuss community gardens' civic values related to the gardeners' possible role in shaping progressive urban policies for the future: by frequently having to defend the spaces from the municipality's redevelopment plans, they learn about the municipality's mode of spatial engagement and ownership claims and spearhead civic involvement in planning. Certomà, Noori and Sondermann (2019) speak of community gardens' "highly revolutionary impact of gardening [on] the city for both transforming the urban environment and the constitution of society" (2019: 1), Eizenberg (2012) describes community gardeners in New York as defending the citizens' "right to public space". These scholars often frame urban gardens as civic commons, thus providing a powerful framework to justify why these spaces should be given long-term tenure.

Rosol (2010) and Metzger et al. (2017) meanwhile discuss how their case-study municipalities handled the tensions associated with exclusive land use on public land by reframing project goals and the municipality's role in ensuring inclusivity: in Gothenburg, the greening participation project in the former harbour formally aimed to target and include youth from all parts of the city, yet in reality only a selected few participated. The municipality handled this tension and what could be viewed as a participation failure by reframing the goals in order to replace the desired equal representation with "the value of long-lasting engagement of a few" (2017: 2532). Rosol meanwhile describes how one public administrator in Berlin defended the fact that the community garden group decided on their own what happened on the plot, while being funded by the local municipality with a public mandate, by arguing that top-down planning was no longer desirable and the civic should have the right to decide. These examples demonstrate how civic gardening groups can succeed in publicly legitimizing their spatial engagement – in the two empirical cases the municipality handled the tensions by reframing goals and collective norms to fit the participants' practice, by referencing the common goods that the groups were helping to create.

### ***Green values***

Recent research also explores urban gardening from the viewpoint of generated green and material values. It looks into the relationship between these generated values and its urban context, reframing who these values belong to and how they should be integrated into the city. Laage-Thomsen and Blok (2020b), for example, discuss the aesthetic tensions one community garden in Copenhagen caused due by its wild, unordered appearance, which Copenhagen municipality eventually closed and tore down due to citizens' complaints. In a similar vein, Gstach (2015) describes how new greening initiatives frequently challenge civics' visual greenspace expectations and that therefore public debate regarding the visual appearance of green values is needed.

Others focus less on the aesthetic values, and more on ecological values such as local food security (Barthel et al. 2015; Espinosa Seguí et al. 2017) or the gardens' ecosystem services that can help improve air and soil quality (Langemeyer et al. 2016).

Haskaj (2020) contributes to this discussion, but from a different angle. He reflects on the ownership over the visual and green values that are created and how these are appropriated, by studying the trajectory of allotment gardens in New York and in Oakland, California, from the 1970s up into the present day. He argues that gardeners transformed the formerly vacant spaces into spaces that adhered to a more "bourgeois" aesthetic by creating green spaces, community bonds and a healthy, productive self – values which were later appropriated by public and private investors who then displaced the gardeners (and their spaces).

Overall, the research into allotment and community gardens' green values connects with wide-ranging discussions regarding the common worth of gardens, and which groups may decide their future in the long run.

As already mentioned, the tenure security of urban gardens is one of the main sources of tensions between municipalities and gardening communities and is related to the multiple other worths the spaces can hold for municipalities, not least their market worth. Tensions arise especially amongst "successful" greening projects, where participants develop strong emotional attachments to the growing green structures and request more permanency. Researchers tend to be supportive of these demands. In Berlin, Rosol (2010) criticises that the local government allowed place-based civic-green initiatives, but kept the right to develop the land in the future, depriving participants of time stability. In the same manner, Christensen (2020: 480), for the case of Danish civic greenspace participants, argues that "dedicated green efforts are denied permanency or even continued temporary existence", while Laage-Thomsen and Blok (2020a: 19) criticise Copenhagen municipality's mandate that vegetation planted in the contractually temporary garden not include perennial plants nor trees as "a set of rather unilaterally imposed and technocratic parameters". These examples show how research into new urban greenspaces points out ingrained forms of spatial oppression, with the question of long-term tenure revealing the asymmetric relationship between civic participants and the municipal landowners in powerful ways. The quoted researchers criticise this asymmetry as a form of oppression of civic spatial engagements, highlighting the need to recognise the value of these new forms of democratic deliberation and to translate it into more tenure security and material solutions.

Concluding, this chapter has given an overview over different research exploring changes associated with the sustainable city and new urban greenspace governance: from urban research criticising sustainable city policies for their social impact, to pragmatic and planning research describing fundamental changes in the nature of planning and the new role of citizen involvement and participation, where technocratic and participatory forms of planning co-exist. What has become clear is that the sustainable city is a contradictory concept: it contains both new opportunities (growth of green and civic values) and dangers (civic displacement); it contains civic participation and inclusion, but also civic contestation and exclusion. This, too, applies to urban gardens: they can be explored as arenas for civic and green engagements as well as contestations and displacement at the same time.

What is missing, however, is a detailed exploration of the asymmetric ownership arrangements between municipal landowners and gardening communities related to the spaces' values and how these are currently re-negotiated in the context of planning processes in the sustainable city – a gap this study wants to help close.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

This thesis approaches the research field of contested urban gardens from the viewpoint of valuation conflicts. For this I draw upon Boltanski and Thévenot's justification theory and Thévenot's theory of engagement regimes that I will now shortly describe. The chapter ends with a description of my own analytical lens.

#### 3.1. Centring on “orders of worth”: Justification theory

The act of valuation is a fundamental and inherent part of urban planning. Based on American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey (1916), we can say that planning actors prize and estimate urban space; they pass judgement upon the value of a specific land-use when compared to another kind. I understand value through this pragmatist lens: as something that does not simply exist, but as the result of actions and negotiations.

The notion of valuation is not only present in pragmatist urban research, but also in neo-Marxist urban studies, and runs through Lefebvre's influential theory on spatial production. I shall shortly present how Lefebvre uses the notion of value, since it differs from the pragmatist valuation lens and explains the more nuanced appeal of pragmatist urban research.

*Henri Lefebvre* distinguishes between “exchange value” and “use value”. This polar conceptualisation frames much of his critique of post-war modernist and technocratic (sub)urbanism.<sup>5</sup> He uses the concept of “exchange value” to describe the dominating impact of capitalism on spatial production. The term “use value” can hold different meanings for Lefebvre, but always refers to a way of using or thinking about space where economic interests do not dominate. He (1996: 131), for example, describes cities from previous times, such as the renaissance or the medieval ages, and the Mediterranean city of today as dominated by use values that, he argues, support an “ensemble of differences” between spaces, objects and products lacking in contemporary Western cities. The modernist rationalist city of the 1960s with its suburban developments and spaces of mass consumption, Lefebvre claims, is dominated by economic activities. These activities determine how urban life and urban spaces are conceived, perceived and lived in. He (1996: 73) therefore writes: “today exchange value is so dominant over use and use value that it more or less suppresses it.” This alleged dominance of exchange values in the so-called neoliberal city has influenced critical urban research to this day (e.g. Harvey 2012; Brenner and Theodore 2005; Smith 2010) and continues to influence contemporary scholars studying the relationship between capitalist forces and urban development.

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<sup>5</sup> Lefebvre's conceptualisation of the urban follows a similar dichotomy. He understands the urban in explicit opposition to the rural. Rural space is being threatened by the proclaimed “right to nature” (Lefebvre 1996) of urban dwellers moving to the countryside, appropriating and disposing rurality with the required new infrastructure. Thus Lefebvre's (1991) famous call for the “right to the city” aims also to protect nature's use value from the effects of spatial decentralization.

*Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot's* (1991/2006) theory of justification differs from Lefebvre's valuation duality and emphasis on structuring forces, thereby allowing urban conflicts and contestation to be studied in more fine-grained nuances.

Boltanski and Thévenot, however, do not resort to individualism and the view that values are the result of individual and autonomous decisions without any shared structure. Rather their theory lies between both approaches and provides a framework for understanding how actors engage and handle disagreements and valuation conflicts during different "situations" on different scales, from interactions on a micro level to meso level debates and contestations.

At the core of their theory is their conceptualisation of a set of different, collectively shared understandings of what constitutes a common good called "orders of worth", which are applied in situations of conflict. Orders of worth help establish equivalence. This means they frame and give meaning to the conflict in a specific way that emphasises the generality of a situation and connects them to other similar situations, justifying the desired path of action.

A justification thus gives weight to one's critique, by linking the critic's arguments to a wider collective of the common good, in "an attempt to move beyond stating a particular or personal viewpoint towards proving that the statement is generalizable and relevant for a common good, showing why or how this general claim is legitimate" (Thévenot et al. 2000: 236).

Boltanski and Thévenot conceptualise six such orders of worth,<sup>6</sup> adapted and extended later to seven orders of worth by Thévenot et al. (2000), that each references a different kind of common good and offer different modes of evaluation of what is of value for common humanity. Each order requires different ways of reasoning and gathering of information, relates the individual to the collective in different ways, and comes with a kind of ideal type – actors assumed to represent the worth in the best way, whose judgement can be called upon if necessary.

These seven orders of worth (see table 1) are: market, industrial, civic, domestic, inspired, opinion and green worth. Market worth comes with a quantitative numeric mode of evaluation (the financial price), whereas industrial worth – represented in the figure of the professional planner, for example – will evaluate a dispute based on productivity and efficiency, with valued relationships being organised and functional. In the civic order, the collective – the citizens of a city, for example – is important; valued relationships are ones based on collective solidarity that involve people for a collective action, with every collective member representing the worth in equal terms. Green worth evaluates a dispute based on the environmental friendliness of the disputed action, the environmentalist figure representing this worth. Inspired worth refers to the expression of creative values; valued relationships are based on passion, with the figure of the artist standing for this worth. Domestic and opinion evaluates a conflict based on reputation (domestic) and how renowned the situation is, by being covered in media sources, for example.

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<sup>6</sup> They base their concept on selected written works of cultural and societal importance, which negotiate the relationship between different public worths and which have impacted public policy. The civic worth, for example, is based on the French labour union manual.

	<b>Market</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Civic</b>	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>Inspired</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>Mode of evaluation</b>	Price	Technical efficiency	Collective welfare	Esteem	Creativeness	Renown	Environmental friendliness
<b>Test</b>	Market competitive-ness	Reliability	Equality and solidarity	Trustworthiness	Passion	Popularity	Sustainability
<b>Relevant proof</b>	Monetary	Measurable criteria, statistics	Formal, official	Oral, personally warranted	Emotional involvement	Semiotic	Ecological
<b>Qualified objects</b>	Market goods and services	Technical objects, plan	Rules and regulations, rights	Locale, heritage	Emotionally invested body or item	Media	Healthy environment
<b>Qualified human beings</b>	Consumer seller	Professional expert	Equal citizens, solidarity unions	Authority	Creative being	Celebrity	Environmental- alist

Table 1: Summary of orders of worth, based on Thévenot et al. 2000

Each order of worth provides different ways of expressing or understanding a situation in general terms and gives weight to an argument by referencing the common good. The planned redevelopment of a local greenspace, for example, can be justified by referencing market or civic worth such as housing or the tax revenues needed, or contested by referencing the space's green or inspired worth, for instance.

This example illustrates what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 135) call “the diversity of the contingencies” – disputes, such as redevelopment conflicts, belong to different “worlds” (2006: 147); they can be justified through different common good arguments and can shift between worlds and different orders of worth.

Not only is each situation therefore characterised by a plurality of (conflicting) worths; since actors belong to different worlds in parallel, there is uncertainty over operative worth, i.e. whether the mode of evaluation and claim to common good is “real”. Whether, in other words, the worth in question is the base for everyday actions. This presence of different possible orders opens up the possibility of conflict and protest over what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 137) call “disturbed situations”: situations with uncertainties of worth and/or legitimacy of the justification that require the recourse to a test to be resolved.

Tests are judgements rooted in the situation; they bring together objects and people belonging to a specific world of order that can manifest the worth such as legal rights, that provide a legitimate and controllable justification, that can serve as evidence and establish “states of worth” (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 131).

Assembling objects and people that legitimises worth requires specific knowledge and competence, or, speaking with Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 145), “a moral sense”. By this they refer to the ability to identify the nature of the situation and conflict, to draw in the corresponding justification, show the value of one's own material and immaterial objects and diminish the objects of the opponents. Justifying the green value through the documented existence of protected species or referring to the competence of experts are examples for this. The more generalizable the objects or persons assembled are, the more their weight and engagement in a situation is assured, which is why objects that ensure the highest degree of

generalisability – “stable referents” (Boltanski and Thévenot 1999) such as quantifiable manifestations of worth – provide a high degree of consistency and are sought after.

Any observation of instability or disorder regarding the assembled objects and persons produces a challenge to the argued states of worth, which can question their status as objects and thus threaten the legitimate argument.

Worth disputes thus contain not only configurations of various objects, they also include the continued negotiation of the testing object’s worth, and thus a potential drawing in of new objects, exchange of others and repeating of the test, to reduce the contingent character of a situation. While Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 135) argue that stable referents play an important role in stabilising uncertain situations, “no situation, however pure, can permanently eliminate the diversity of the contingencies.”

A situation is pure, according to Boltanski and Thévenot, if the valuation and following action have been grounded in a common world and the beings and objects have been activated and arranged to fit with this common world. The general principle of equivalence and the world on which the test should be based on has been decided, which makes it possible to sort out relevant objects, persons and arguments, and to justify associations.

In reality, however, disputes often take place in disturbed, impure situations. Of particular interest for this thesis is what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) conceptualise as “clashes” that describe conflicts of a more fundamental level. Conflicts of worth require tests; these can be challenged for different reasons: the engaged persons or objects can be accused of having acted in the interest of worth of a different nature (the discovery of politicians having accepted bribes is a prime example for such), thus the fairness and legitimacy of the test is questioned and the validity challenged. Boltanski and Thévenot (1999: 373) in this context speak of “unfair situations”, where the worth relevant in one world has been transferred to another in a “shift of worth”, and persons are accused of being concerned with objects from another world rather than the world they are pretending to be engaged with. Such conflicts require the repeating of tests and judgements with certain objects and persons removed.

Clashes refer to more extensive, fundamental critique and disagreement, where not only the test itself is contested, but the principle of equivalence itself and the question which worth should be debated. In other words, it is about the framing of the problem itself, and which worths are supposed to be in conflict with each other, and which test of relevance to which world fits this problem. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 224) write:

In clashes, the discord thus has to do not simply with the worth of the beings present, but with the very true identification of the beings that matter and those that do not; it has to do then, with the true nature of the situation, with reality and the common good to which reference may be made to reach an agreement. The goal is no longer to repeat the test in a purer and more equitable fashion by eliminating privileges and neutralizing handicaps, but to demystify the test as such, in order to place things on their true ground and to institute a different test that will be valid in a different world.

Clashes destabilise a situation by demanding the problem be reframed so that a different test based on a different worth order should be implemented to solve it. Since clashes disagree about the nature of a situation, they are de-stabilising and threaten the order regulating the relations between different worlds. Therefore, according to Boltanski and Thévenot (2006),

new situations and new arrangements are set up, lining up objects and persons in a new way and attaching them to a new world, to prevent further clashes and stabilise situations. In this sense, participatory planning situations are often the consequence of previous clashes and a growing distance between the world of the industrial worth of planners and the inspired and domestic world of citizens, and an attempt to handle contradictions between different spatial engagements.

Core to the theory of justification is the concept of “compromise”, which provides valuable insights for this thesis. Compromises, according to Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 278), “suggest the possibility of a principle that can take judgments based on objects stemming from different worlds and make them compatible. It aims at a common good that transcends the two different forms of worth in presence by including both of them.” Compromises don’t resolve a conflict through a test situated in just one world, but rather by allowing beings of importance in different worlds to co-exist. This, according to Boltanski and Thévenot, requires actors actively co-operating to allow present beings relevant in different worlds to co-exist, and that in order to do so, the principle on which the agreement is based is not clarified. Instead, they agree that common goods can mean different things in different worlds. This co-existence is therefore fragile, since the principle of the agreement can always be questioned and a different agreement and action demanded.

Boltanski and Thévenot, however, argue that relating the principle of the compromise to some common good can strengthen this fragility. Figures of the common good generally lend themselves well to compromises, according to Boltanski and Thévenot, because terms such as “public” or “public good” maintain an ambiguous reference as to which collective they actually refer to and which characteristics define them, for instance the public as a political body is not the same as the public as societal body. Arguing that the compromise is of benefit for a public good thus can accommodate beings that are ambiguous, i.e. belonging to different worlds, and explains why, according to Boltanski and Thévenot, a large part of negotiating a compromise consists of finding the right ambiguous wording and terms that are acceptable for all involved actors.

Compromises referencing common goods can be stabilised through law, giving the compromise its own identity, thereby transforming it in such a way that it no longer relies on “indivisible objects” (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 278). Stabilisation then also holds true when disparate objects belonging to one world for instance are removed, and the compromise in fact would no longer be needed – this, emphasise Boltanski and Thévenot, makes compromises more resistant to critique.

In sum, Boltanski and Thévenot’s theory on justifications provides a rich framework and vocabulary to study how valuation conflicts between different forms of public worth in the public domain are constructed, negotiated and decided. Orders of worth are debated and disputed, because they provide different ways of linking persons and things to different understandings of common goods, qualifying them for public judgements in different ways. Since these acts are inherent to urban planning, their framework lends itself to studying planning conflicts without resolving to the structuralist lens of neo-Marxist urban research.

### **3.2. Centring on “civic spatial engagements”: Theory of engagement regimes**

Laurent Thévenot developed his and Boltanski’s theory of justification further into a sociology of engagement regimes. It shares the interests in valuation conflicts and what kinds of justifications are brought forward in public domains, but extends the scope to include situations located below public confrontations. He does so by focusing on the different ways actors engage in material relations that link an individual to a wider public – a common – and the role these engagements play during disputes, such as redevelopment conflicts.

Plurality and an interest in oppression is at the theory’s core, with Thévenot (2011: 53) arguing that “[t]he tyranny exercised by one regime upon another happens when the quest for guarantee of one kind of good stifles engagement directed at another kind of good.”

Thévenot (2011, 2014) conceptualises three different ways actors can engage with a common cause such as an urban public greenspace, which he calls “regimes of engagements”: an actor can engage in justification for the common good, engage in a plan or engage in familiarity.

To engage in justification for the common goods requires an actor to bring forward argumentation and justification based on orders of worth that reference the common good.

Engaging in a plan is when an actor exercises a will, for instance by implementing a redevelopment plan; its driving force and evaluative good is to accomplish a plan.

The worth of familiar engagement shows itself in personalised feelings of ease and comfort – the personal attachment and intimacy actors have with a familiar surrounding, for instance. Familiar engagement, Thévenot (2012: 3) emphasises, “does not allow for grasping objects qualified for the public, or even objects operated by a function.” In other words: those engaging with their surroundings in a familiar manner will have difficulties to bring forward legitimate arguments against actions based on the engagement in justification for the common good or an individual plan. Referring to this ability to up-scale from one’s familiar engagement to a common space, to assemble other actors and worths, Thévenot (2015) speaks of “commonality in the plural” that make personal concerns common.

Thévenot (2012) identifies two operations which help create a commonality in the plural: “communicating” and “composing”. Communicating refers to the acts of translations that allow different personal attachments to the world to be brought together, both in commonality but also in difference. It does not include the enforced levelling out of difference. Where communicating creates an imagined commonality, the second operation, composing, refers to the finding and implementation of a compromise, of integrating the difference and mediating between it.

Commonality in the plural cuts across all three regimes of engagement: new civic-municipal greening initiatives for instance require constant communicating and composing, amongst gardeners and municipalities, as well as justifying engagements to demonstrate the common good if this is required.

Thévenot emphasises that the ability to communicate and compose, so to create a commonality in the plural, is not something equally distributed amongst different actors and

institutions. Rather there are situation where one regime of engagements dominates and appropriates other regimes. He (2014: 10) writes:

Since each regime of engagement supports a distinct kind of good, human power and realism, they often clash when they meet, or result in oppressions when one of them weighs heavy on the others. Arranging compromises between them is needed for composing a community.

Thévenot (2012, 2014) and Thévenot et al. (2000) apply his theory of engagement to analyse different spatial disputes, from planning conflicts surrounding an artistic community garden in Paris, for example, to large-scale conflicts related to a planned dam project in the Californian Clavey River. The fact that his studied disputes relate to nature in various ways is no coincidence. According to Thévenot (2012: 2), nature is characterised by a plurality of ways people engage with it, “from bodily and personal attachments to inhabited and familiarly used places, up to commitments to public causes which are worthwhile for the common good, or even more comprehensive global issues dealing with the future of the whole planet.”

This plurality of attachments can be both an opportunity and challenge when activists try and contest development projects. Thévenot demonstrates this by analysing how various actors try to translate their personal attachment into a common language during contesting activities and how challenging it is to translate familiar attachments in such a way as to make them common to outsiders – those not familiarly engaged. To illustrate this, he mentions his encounter with an activist in California who tried to convey her attachments and the worth of the valley area by showing photographs of plants and animals she had taken, and showing him and his colleague around the area. But he (2012: 7) concludes: “As always in such familiar engagements, making it mutual for commonality was impossible in a short time and with persons who were unfamiliar with this surrounding. We actually did not see anything, nor felt any ease.”

Environmental disputes only manage to create a commonality and demand political action if the intimate and familiar engagement underlying the contestation is translated into the language of the plural orders of worth, which requires a full chain of communication and aligning persons and objects with the concern. Thévenot et al. (2000) emphasise that each conflicting situation can require different arguments and that reference to civic importance can mean different things in different nations and political cultures.

In sum, Thévenot’s theory of engagement regimes provides a link between understanding political action and contestation, and the everyday lived experiences and personal attachment people develop with their intimate surroundings as well as planners’ engagement with a plan. His framework of engagement regimes draws attention to acts of translations and of linking different engagements, of new communalities being created. He himself (2012: 14) stresses the importance of creating more awareness for the plurality of affinities to environmental spaces with the words:

I wish we include in our conversation, not only the mutual engagement in debating public criticism and justification, or competing individual opinions, which are usually taken into account in the conception of the public space, but communicating through personal affinities to common places and possibilities of engaging in close mutual familiarity.

It is this emphasis on the plurality of spatial attachments and how they can be related to public goods in different ways, especially green spaces, that provides an important analytical lens for this thesis.

Equally important is that the theory addresses how regimes of engagements can oppress each other, but balancing this with ways oppressions can be contested and compromises found. Insightful is how Thévenot links the intimate and personal spatial attachments through chains of transformations to public disputes that reference and negotiate different orders of worth. Intimate spatial attachments can become political forces; they are dynamic and can shift to different testing arenas.

### **3.3. Connecting participatory planning, orders of worth and civic spatial engagement: Pragmatic sociology of urbanism**

Both theoretical lenses – Boltanski and Thévenot’s justification theory as well as Thévenot’s theory of engagement – have strongly influenced how I approach my empirical research and my object of inquiry.

I draw on both theories’ emphasis on plurality, shifts and tension. Boltanski and Thévenot’s orders of worth for example helped me understand how the notion of green worth, civic worth and market worth connect allotment gardeners and their objects to a wider public in different ways, and are used as arguments against and in favour of the studied allotment garden spaces (see chapter 5.2.2.). Thévenot’s engagement regime provided me with a lens for understanding the different, sometimes contradictory layers a “public space” can have, that are grounded in the different ways people can engage with space (see chapter 5.2.1.).

Importantly, both theories together establish a framework to analyse planning disputes in its contradictions and complexities. I approach the cases of allotment garden contestations with Boltanski and Thévenot’s lens and vocabulary in mind: as disputes between actors of different worlds and different ways of engaging with the space, where objects and people are continuously re-assembled as tests to justify the desired action.

I repeatedly draw on the concepts of disturbed situation, clashes and compromises, to capture the continuous re-negotiation of worths and relevant tests as well as ask how disputes can be resolved with compromises that allow different engagements and worths to co-exist.

I extend this by exploring how the relationship between different spatial engagement regimes are institutionalised and stabilised, and how power asymmetries and civic solidarities are inscribed into what I call ownership arrangements. I use the term ownership to emphasise the governance arrangements underlying spatial engagements and the distribution of values between different actors. I thereby draw attention to the law, to contracts that shape and position different ownership forms to each other.

To this I add a third lens on civic planning participation, already discussed in chapter 2.3., to explore how the institutionalised ownership arrangements are re-shaped and re-negotiated as part of planning processes, and what the material and social consequences of these processes are. The analytical lens of this thesis thus explores the studied valuation disputes in its dynamic complexities, studying how different regimes of spatial engagements and orders of

worth are re-negotiated in the cases' contestation and participation, and how this impacts ownership arrangements.

As the next chapter on method and research design will now elaborate, choosing cases of different scales allowed me to explore how these re-negotiations are linking cities' micro, meso and macro levels with each other.

## **4. Method and Research Design**

### **4.1. Methodological approach: Qualitative case-study research**

To study the valuation conflicts of allotment gardens, I chose a qualitative research design in the inductive tradition of Glaser and Strauss's (2017) grounded theory, based on case study research in three cities (Hamburg, Basel and Copenhagen) and by employing a range of different qualitative methods (ethnographic fieldwork, interviews and document analysis). In doing so, I approached my object of inquiry with a sociological-ethnographic lens (Honer and Hitzler 2015; Pfadenhauer 2005) in mind that influenced how I thought about the field and phenomenon I was studying, which methods I used and how I related theoretical concepts to my empirical material.

Based on an understanding of social reality as continuously constructed, re-constructed or transformed, ethnographic research aims for the embodied study of a phenomenon in its natural context (Pink and Morgan 2013), in order to capture the pluralistic, many-sided approaches and perceptions of the studied phenomenon (Bischoff 2014), resulting ideally in what Geertz (1973) conceptualises as "thick descriptions" of the studied phenomenon.

Following an inductive approach, I developed descriptions and own categories based on the empirical material. This process was guided along the way by inductive principles of theoretical sampling (where the shifting state of research and research questions impact which material is collected) and continued comparison of my material. With time, the open, inductive nature shifted towards what Tavory and Timmermans (2014) call "abductive" analytical approach, where I approached and connected my categories with different interdisciplinary theories, using them as "sensitizing concepts" to redraw and reframe my categories.

I understand my Ph.D. project as a qualitative study with elements of what Knoblauch (2005) calls "focused ethnography" or Pink and Morgan (2013) refer to as "short-term ethnography", due to several reasons. First, when I started my thesis, I already possessed some knowledge of the field, so that I limited my research focus to cases of conflicts. Second, I did not spend time in my field for a continuous, long period that often marks ethnographic studies, but undertook repeated shorter, more focused stays in the field, which generated a lot of recorded data. Third, I did not attempt to engage with the field by taking on a "natural" role, such as becoming an allotment gardener myself, but stayed in my role as a researcher and stated my intention and project clearly from the start, something Pink and Morgan (2013) argue is a necessary part of focused ethnographies. Even though I did not engage with the field for one long stretch of time, I did build relationships with informants in Hamburg and Basel and re-visited them over several years, thus partly following a more longitudinal approach as encouraged by Lamont and Swidler (2014).

## 4.2. Design: Case-studies and comparative research

In order to translate my research interest and methodological approach into a concrete research design, I chose a comparative case-study design, agreeing with case-study theorist Yin (1981: 98) that “the peculiar strength of the case study is its ability to cover both a contemporary phenomenon and its context”. Choosing to study three different cases, I relate my work to a growing body of methodological literature in urban studies such as McFarlane and Robinson (2012) that are calling for more explicit global comparative studies to support novel theoretical insight and to Krause (2016: 53) who argues that “unsettling established views of the world requires comparison, at least among ways of seeing the world”.

By selecting three cases located in different European cities – Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen<sup>7</sup> – I chose a “multi-site” (Lamont and Swidler 2014) design, extending my analysis to different situations and localities. Case study can refer to differently bounded systems; the bounding and naming of it is an important part of the process, which changed throughout my research. In the beginning, I selected three “symmetric” cases based on assumptions of which categories were relevant; all were place-bound associations either currently in the process of being (partly) redeveloped, or had been so in the past (see pictures of the cases on page 30). In Copenhagen, the “Faste Batteri” site had been partly redeveloped for a school building in 2005; in Basel, the displacement of the “Dreisplitz” association in 2020 was part of a democratically elected compromise; and in Hamburg, the associations “Heimat” and “Barmbeker Schweiz” were mostly displaced around 2016. The fact that the cases were located in different cities and nations, however, was never intended to be what Krause (2016: 52) calls “the explanans”, where the category of different city contexts would explain any observed differences. Rather, I selected the cases based on previous knowledge and research activities: I had been working on a study exploring the “Dreisplitz” community in Basel, where I became interested in the category of displacement. Being part of a European research network on allotment garden research, I was aware of the variety of cases within European nations that I wanted to explore further. As civic-public urban greenspaces connected to the industrial past, allotment gardens are a spatial phenomenon found predominantly in Europe, North America and the former Soviet Union (see Bell et al. 2016). Though civic agricultural practices in cities are not limited to these global regions, allotment gardens’ relationship between civic and public actors and its related historical legacies of civic inclusion are unique and closely intertwined with these regions’ industrial and political past.

An online search then led me to the cases of Hamburg and Copenhagen that I was drawn to due to the fact that each city had experienced public contestations related to allotment gardens, yet in each city different contestation structures and actors had been activated. The fact that all cities, despite being located in different national contexts, share similarities, informed the selection: all are so-called city-states with administrative and political units whose policies have taken an entrepreneurial turn in the past two decades, and the associations are located in former industrial areas that are increasingly becoming “middle-class”. These similarities allowed me, from the start, to view the cases’ city context not as a

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<sup>7</sup> For reasons of simplicity, I distinguish and refer to my cases throughout this thesis by a shortened version of the political-administrative names for each city: Basel for Kanton Basel-Stadt, Hamburg for Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, and Copenhagen for Københavns Kommune.

central category that set the cases apart, while still taking national variants into consideration. With my research proceeding, I took this approach of “imbrication” further by redefining my cases and understanding them no longer as three clearly-cut separate cases. Rather, I viewed them as sub-cases contributing to my overall case of valuation conflicts between different kinds of spatial engagement with allotment gardens. I started to see the displacements as one aspect of more extensive ownership changes, rather than *the* change itself. Related to this, I changed the scope of my case study in Copenhagen, in order to explore current tensions between Copenhagen municipality, the civic Allotment Garden Central Association and a group of gardeners mobilising for new price policies.

My research focused on valuation tensions from the past 20 years (Copenhagen) and 10 years (Hamburg and Basel) leading up to the present. I chose this focus because even though allotment gardens in all three cities had experienced redevelopments and displacements before, the valuation disputes reached a new intensity and new compromises were found, closely connected to the cities’ new urban sustainability governance regimes and the cities’ changing population structure, which I wanted to explore. However, by limiting my empirical data collection to this time period, I cannot compare the recent valuation changes and tensions with the longer history of allotment gardens, which would have allowed for an even deeper understanding.

	<i>Case Basel</i>	<i>Case Hamburg</i>	<i>Case Copenhagen</i>
<i>Contestation level</i>	Municipal	District	National
<i>Studied stakeholders</i>	Activists focusing on civic worth	Activists focusing on green worth	Activists focusing on market worth
<i>Conflict arenas</i>	Political (Civic Referendum)	Political (Initiative), Juridical (Court)	Political (Parliament)

Table 2: Case studies

These changes illustrate the open, processual nature of my research, which at times was challenging. The question – what is this actually a case of? – that, according to Flyvbjerg (2006), every case-study researcher needs to ask themselves, accompanied me throughout the process. And yet, the comparative design helped me develop a wider and richer understanding of my field. A focus on my Basel or Hamburg case alone would perhaps have generated more extensive knowledge about this specific city’s valuation of allotment gardens, but I could not have contextualised it in the same way as a comparative design allows.



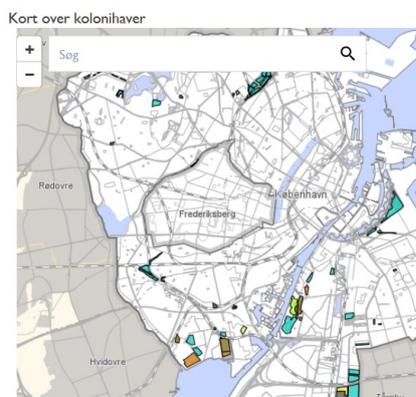
### Case Study Basel

Left picture: Planungsamt Basel; Rest: own.



### Case study Hamburg

Left picture: perholenviertel.hamburg. Rest: own.



### Case study Copenhagen

Left picture: planer.kk.dk. Rest: own.

### 4.3. Field entry: From the top

An ethnographic research approach requires researchers to reflect on the way they access their field (see for example Jeggle 1984 for classical accounts and reflections on the relationship between researchers' engagement with the field and the generated knowledge).

Having three cases meant I had to establish different accesses, with my role and engagement varying with each case.

My engagement with my Basel case started while I was living and working in the city in the early 2010s, during which time there was a public referendum regarding the municipality's plans to redevelop almost half of the city's allotment garden land. Following the conflict, I became interested in the phenomenon of allotment gardens,<sup>8</sup> which led to my involvement in a research project and, in parallel, my thesis.

I approached the field "from the top" (Jeggle 1984) by contacting the "Dreisplitz" association board first via email and then directly via telephone, stating the intention of the project in a way that linked it with the association's own insecure future, declaring rather normatively: "I believe it is important to show the social values of allotment gardens". Just as I stated my research intention, so too did the association board whose core members consisted of two retired working-class Swiss men, their wives, and one couple's grown-up-son. After we met in person, they gave their formal permission and handed me the key that gave me access to the fenced-in site so I could talk with the associations' gardeners on the ground. During this meeting, they expressed the hope that the research might prevent the redevelopment. Even though I distanced myself from this explicit hope, I remained uneasy since it granted me access to what usually is a physically and socially enclosed space while knowing I was unable to help the association in this way.

My first field contacts with my Copenhagen and Hamburg cases followed a similar "top-down" approach (for observations related to my first field-interactions, see the box giving empirical insights below) by contacting representatives via email. Both created different responses: in Hamburg, activist Peter<sup>9</sup> responded to my email, inviting me to attend their upcoming association meetings in a few weeks' time. In Copenhagen meanwhile I got no response and a follow-up email received no response either. Access to my Hamburg case at first seemed comparatively easily: I followed up the first meeting with a round of interviews several weeks later and further attended association meetings; I befriended gardener Jutta, a gardener in her 50s, whom I informally revisited a few times after I had interviewed her.

My engagement with my Copenhagen case however remained difficult. My personal visit to the National Central Association headquarters during public opening hours, where I explained to the present worker that I was a researcher who had tried to contact the formal representatives, did not open any doors. When I eventually did get hold of the Central

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<sup>8</sup> My previous experiences were limited to seeing allotment gardens as a by-passer. The first one I actively remember thinking about was located in a single-family-house area in the rural village I grew up in. I was unable to categorise the space with the dwelling forms I knew at the time and was intrigued by it.

<sup>9</sup> All names of field actors such as allotment gardeners and interviewed experts are anonymised. In order to distinguish between different actors, but without constructing a social hierarchy amongst the informants, I have given each field-actor that I quote or refer to a first name.

Association's president via telephone and asked about the possibility to attend the upcoming biannual congress meeting, I was put politely on hold for several days, without receiving a definite answer. In short, I experienced tensions related to what Warneken and Wittel (1997) call "research-up": I experienced the power-asymmetry between myself and the institutionalised civic field actors, who as gatekeepers had the power to deny me access to the congress where policy decisions impacting allotment gardeners were negotiated and made. As recommended by Warneken and Wittel, I reflected on these experiences and frustrations with other peers, in order to avoid it impacting my results in unconscious ways.

Not much later I did get access and interviewed several stakeholders, by using a combination of different strategies: visiting different association branches and talking to members there, and using the snowballing technique and asking a peer who was affiliated with Copenhagen municipality for names of municipal planners working on allotment gardens.

These experiences of accessing the field gave me a first impression of the cases' different structuralising forces. In both Hamburg and Basel, the studied associations had or still were experiencing redevelopment threats, and my research that initially took on a stronger normative stance and problematized the redevelopments could be understood as a potential stabilising force. In Copenhagen meanwhile, allotment gardens are protected by state law since 2001, yet the Central Association is experiencing internal conflicts that could threaten their future, which stakeholders were interested in keeping contained internally.

## **Field Insights: First meetings with the civic associations in Hamburg and Basel**

In May 2015, I visited the allotment garden site in Hamburg for the first time. Walking along a small pedestrian path towards the communal building, I noticed that the garden plots along the path were in a state of disorder: overgrown, torn down huts, material lying in heaps on the ground, temporary barbed wire dividing the path from the plots, a picture of vacant disorder. The following 120 minutes of the monthly association meeting that I attended resulted in the powerful ordering of the chaos and destruction I had walked by.

I was met by 10 people, the core group of garden activists, all of them of German origin, most above the age of 50, with middle-class-professional background. Peter and Harald, the informal leaders, briefed me in calm and clear words on the redevelopments projects and their attempts to stop their eviction. Together, the group told me about the political structure in Hamburg, the requirements and possibilities for local referendums, the low valuation of allotment gardens according to the national environmental plan, the local housing pressure that the plan failed to address; they summed up the arguments of supporters of the redevelopment, and the various methods they applied to stop the project. I was met with extensive political, planning and environmental knowledge, a sense of order and understanding in what I had perceived as a vast and messy redevelopment process involving multiple stakeholders and planning delays.

The ordering aspect related also to my presence: What exactly was I doing research on? What was the title of my work? Could I describe my Basel case to them? The group demanded I bring my research and my researcher's role into the meeting.

After the formal meeting ended, the group hunched together over the plan for the new plot divisions, collecting perceived shortcomings that Peter would later communicate to the involved landscape planner, showing that their group engaged with the plan, could connect the abstract visualisation with their own gardening practices and needs, and identify ways to ensure their individual plots would be protected by the new divisions as best as possible. Furthermore, it revealed the powerful role they had: they could voice concerns and needs to the landscape architects making the plans, and they could influence the planning of the new landscaping divisions. One of the gardeners offered to show me her plot; on the way there, walking along destroyed materiality, she pointed out the garden of Peter, the informal leader: a garden rich in flora and fauna, filled with old fruit trees, a self-created pond and a little self-built hut. The gardener told me that this garden had been awarded the "garden of the year" award by the Hamburg environmental department several times; just as many times he had been officially reprimanded by the old, now disbanded association to take better care of his overgrown, disordered garden. It revealed that on the gardening site, different understandings of ecological order and aesthetic had been able to exist next to each other, with the association holding power by being able to set the borders between green order and disorder.

This differed from my first association meeting in Basel at the yearly association meeting of the "Dreispliz" association in February 2014. In Hamburg around 10 people, all of German origin, had attended. In Basel, the room was filled with around 80 persons, several former Italian, Turkish and Spanish guest workers, with the 8 board members sitting on a slightly elevated separate table. Within the next two hours, the collective space inhabited by the association revealed itself to be in stark contrast to the one in Hamburg. In Hamburg, the tone of communication had been informal, all were sitting around the same table, no formal roles were mentioned, though Peter and Harald had led through the meeting and had spoken most of the time. In Basel, the tone of communication was marked by a high degree of formality and rules: opportunities to ask questions or discuss issues were limited to a given slot on the agenda, yet several times the audience was asked to give their vote by raising their hand on various different matters, that decided the issue. Different ways of democratic decision-making were apparent: through voting in Basel, through discussions in Hamburg.

Aesthetic differences became apparent, too: the "overgrown" plot was present at the meeting, but in different ways than in Hamburg. In Basel, the association president urged people to stop using weed poison, not motivated by ecological arguments, but because "the city authorities are increasingly controlling this, so we must be careful". When I visited the gardening site soon after, I saw that only a handful of gardeners had a wilder aesthetic; most plots were orderly and well-kept, some huts giving the impression of a tiny Swiss chalet.

Back at the association meeting, the association leader introduced me as a university researcher and requested the present members to "talk to her if she asks you anything". Whereas in Hamburg different group members had started to ask me questions, here the members were told how to engage with me, by responding to my questions.

In sum, both association meetings followed different democratic styles. In Hamburg I observed a participatory mode: how the members related to each other, who acted as leaders and spokespersons, was not immediately apparent for someone joining the first time, but an informal order was present nonetheless. In Basel, the representative mode and order, and how members related to each other, was more transparent: the leaders sat elevated, issues were voted on, but not discussed.

#### 4.4. Methods and data: Qualitative triangulation

Rather than approaching my research field with a predefined list of methods, I chose the methods along the way to fit with my evolving research interests and way of engaging with the field. When later in the research process the category of governance settings became central, I conducted an analysis of the legal documents such as the allotment garden laws, which I had not considered as relevant at the start of my research.

For this reason, my data collection included different methods, e.g. attending association meetings, interviewing actors and studying planning and juridical documents.

By applying different methods and collecting a wide range of material, my research followed a triangulation of methods (Flick 2004) that allowed me to understand my cases from different perspectives and angles. I collected the majority of my material between autumn 2017 and autumn 2019, with several interviews for my Basel case going back a couple of years further.

##### 4.4.1. Interviews

<p><b>Case Basel</b> (n=8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Municipal allotment garden coordinators</li> <li>» Leader of Central Association of Allotment Gardens in Basel</li> <li>» Leaders of municipal park and recreation department</li> <li>» Municipal planner</li> <li>» Municipal housing minister</li> <li>» Double-interviews board members of the “Dreisplitz” association</li> </ul>
<p><b>Case Hamburg</b> (n=10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Group interview protest group</li> <li>» Double-interview protest group spokespersons</li> <li>» Allotment gardeners</li> <li>» Landscape planner</li> <li>» Process planner (organiser of participation process)</li> <li>» Double-interview Barmbek district planners</li> <li>» Leader of Central Association of Allotment Gardens in Hamburg</li> <li>» Ecological planner</li> </ul>
<p><b>Case Copenhagen</b> (n=11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Walking interviews allotment gardeners</li> <li>» “Faste Batteri” association representative</li> <li>» Board members of Danish Central Association of Allotment Gardens</li> <li>» Municipal planner</li> <li>» Local community developer</li> <li>» Municipal lawyer</li> <li>» Representative of Allotment Gardens in Europe</li> <li>» Double-interview with garden activists</li> </ul>

Table 3: List of conducted interviews

Over the course of several years, I conducted 29 recorded interviews, some including two or more persons, between my three cases, and engaged in unrecorded field conversations. These interviews fall into three groups.

- (1) Allotment gardeners personally affected by and contesting new valuation practices. In Hamburg I interviewed five, in Basel four and in Copenhagen five gardeners. These interviews were informal in tone and often included mobile elements such as the interviewee showing me around the allotment garden area or their own garden plot.
- (2) The municipal stakeholders driving new valuation practices such as municipal planners and local politicians. In total I interviewed two for my Hamburg case, two for my Copenhagen case and four for my Basel case. These were more formal in tone and took place in the interviewee's office.
- (3) Mediators between the first two groups (national and local allotment garden representatives, participation planners), ranging in tone and formality; these also took place at the interviewee's office. I interviewed four coordinating stakeholders for the Hamburg case, and three each for the Copenhagen and Basel case.

I did not start my research with an exact list of interviewees in mind. For my Hamburg and Basel case, I identified stakeholders from group 2 and 3 from media or planning documents, or from being told their names by gardeners in the field. I formally contacted my interviewees via email and asked whether I could interview them as part of my research, followed by a telephone call to arrange a place and date. With the exception of two telephone interviews – with the European allotment garden representative based in Luxemburg, and the Danish representative based in Jutland – I conducted the interviews in person. Interviews either took place at the interviewee's office or in the gardener's home, garden or association building. The interviews were between 60 to 150 minutes long and recorded. I chose to record the interviews since this allowed me to concentrate on the conversation and later enabled me to write detailed interview summaries (which I did for almost all interviews) or interview transcripts (done for selected interviews).

One person, the municipal allotment garden coordinator in Basel, asked me not to record the interview, and the conversation that followed was remarkably open and critical in tone. The municipal planners in Hamburg visibly relaxed when, one hour into the interview, the recording device's batteries stopped working, telling me "now we can finally talk freely". With these experiences in mind, it is likely that, despite me guaranteeing anonymity, the presence of the recording device did "tame" how municipal stakeholder spoke about their experiences; but rather than seeing it as negatively impacting the authenticity of the data, I reflected on these situations as offering me insights into the field's operational modus.

I brought a list of pre-noted questions along to all my interviews that I adapted for each case that revolved around current conflicts and contestation. I would start the interview with an open question such as, "Could you describe to me how the situation of allotment gardening has changed in the past years?", noted down aspects that the interviewee mentioned and asked follow-up questions that structured the interview, complemented with questions from my own list.

With Mario Luis Small (2009), I understand each interview as being a case study in itself, giving insights into how the person engages with allotment gardens and how they coordinate this with other types of engagements. The observational notes in the box below illustrate how the interview situations are rich in different kinds of spatial knowledge.

## Reflection of spatial engagement regimes during interview situations

At the first association meeting in Hamburg that I attended, 55-year-old Jutta offered to show me around the site, which was in the process of being “disentangled” from its green and material structure. I gladly accepted, and together we spent the next hour on an informal walking interview around a site that was being restructured, with signs of material disruption being all around: fences, dug up soil, heaps of material lying about, but within the disruption was an area where the gardens remained more or less intact, untouched. Where I was overwhelmed by the apparent material chaos, Jutta seemed unfazed, leading me through the landscape, taking shortcuts between plots, finding her way between fences, bushes and remains of garden houses and picking up stranded objects that she was thinking of re-using. She was pointing out, along the way, different kinds of ecology and telling me their past and present story: Those large trees in the distant? Mulberry trees, planted by the National Socialist local government during World War II because cotton was needed for uniforms. That hole in the birch tree? A whole family of bats were living in there. That dead-looking tree over there? A plum tree that could not be cut down because it fertilised the plum trees in the surrounding even in its dire state. The walking interview with Jutta gave me first insights into the close entanglement between the gardeners and the landscape and how it resulted in intimate spatial knowledge.

Several months later I visited Jutta again. Talking to her in her garden, she showed me which new plants she had planted or which had grown; her hands touched the plants and leaves, she picked up objects – the physical closeness between her body and the green materiality on her plot was apparent. The next day I interviewed two municipal park and recreation planners and walked into an anonymous meeting room on the fourth floor of Barmbek’s administration bureau. Both interviewees sat prepared, with a folder, notepad and official planning reports of the housing project lying in front of them. Where Jutta had taken me for physical walks around the site, the planners took me on a different kind of walk: showing me various large A3 prints of aerial pictures depicting the site from above that appeared like an isolated spatial unit with different shades of brown and green. Where Jutta’s hands had touched flora and fauna, the hands of both planners sifted through the notebooks, showing an intimacy with the planning documents and where to find which information.

Later in the interview, the head of Barmbek’s park and recreation unit described the site as an “indifferent mass”. After having experienced the garden variety and different kinds of spatial engagement on the ground in closer physical proximity myself, the description seemed harsh to me. But when I looked at the aerial pictures, the different plots did blend into one large, homogenous unit with different shades of green for plants and brown for gardening houses, looking, yes, indifferent. The intimate experiences and knowledge that I had been told about on the walks became invisible, the mulberry trees and rose bushes unidentifiable. It emphasised the two modes of spatial descriptions by philosopher Michel De Certeau (1984), who distinguishes between spatial knowledge generated through acts of distant seeing and knowledge generated through acts of walking, as well as Thévenot’s (2011) regimes of engaging with a plan and engaging in familiarity. The pictures enabled a totalizing overview of the site, but the movements and relationships on the ground had become invisible.

Both interview situations thus assembled objects and persons together in different ways, demonstrating differences in how people related to and engaged with the allotment garden space.

#### 4.4.2. Field events

<b>Case Basel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Yearly association meeting February 2015</li> <li>» Yearly association meeting February 2018</li> <li>» Yearly association meeting February 2019</li> </ul>
<b>Case Hamburg</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Association meeting May 2016</li> <li>» Association meeting November 2017</li> <li>» Association meeting April 2018</li> <li>» Association meeting September 2019</li> <li>» Garden State festival Kampnagel Theater September 2018</li> <li>» Annual Hamburg allotment garden festivity September 2018</li> </ul>
<b>Case Copenhagen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Amager urban-development public workshop December 2018</li> </ul>

Table 4: List of attended field events

As part of my research I attended various field events, such as association meetings in Basel and Hamburg (see paper 1). These would usually last between 2-3 hours and were attended by 10-15 persons in Hamburg and estimated 60-80 persons in Basel (the latter being a yearly meeting, formally obligatory to attend and therefore involving more participants). During these meetings, I took occasional “scratch notes” (Sanjek 1990) that I would later turn into more elaborated protocols.<sup>10</sup>

In Hamburg, I furthermore attended secondary events such as the annual allotment festivity and a festival called “Garden State” at alternative Kampnagel Theater, where members of the protest group were invited to speak. Both events targeted an audience interested in urban gardens, but spoke and attracted different audiences, as well as putting different items on their agenda: an academic, younger urban middle-class audience was invited to think and discuss urban gardens as a political statement in the Kampnagel Theater in Hamburg; a more working-class audience at the head-office of allotment gardens in Hamburg was invited to buy food snacks and plants, or attend courses on how to cut apple trees the right way. The groups did not mix, and comparing both events gave insights into how different social classes were engaging with allotment gardens in different ways and in different spaces.

In Copenhagen, I attended a local public participation workshop in the district Amager, where the new municipal urban greenspace policy was presented and discussed.

In addition, I also visited each allotment garden site without a concrete purpose such as conducting an interview, talking to people or attending an association meeting, but rather to explore the sites as spaces of materiality and affect (see paper 2). During these visits, I located the body as an analytical instance like Mohr and Vetter (2014) describe and explored the spaces’ subtle ownership dimensions, and how it felt to move within it. This allowed me to contextualise municipalities’ new material strategies described in chapter 5.2.5. from an affect point of view.

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<sup>10</sup> I tried to limit my note-taking, since I could sense it caused some field irritation. One gardener in Hamburg for example looked at me in an astonished way while I was taking notes during one association meeting, leaned in to me and said: “Wer schreibt, der bleibt”. This saying is used to describe the power of formal written objections against bureaucratic decisions, and I felt caught out as the researcher appropriating the field events she was part of, causing slight irritation.

#### 4.4.3. Field documents

<b>Case Basel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Juridical documents (local allotment garden regulations)</li> <li>» Planning documents (zone plan, framework plan, municipal housing strategy)</li> <li>» Own photographs</li> </ul>
<b>Case Hamburg</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Juridical documents (national and local allotment garden law, national and local environment protection law, tree regulations, regulations for building on former bombed sites)</li> <li>» Planning documents (district housing strategy, redevelopment plan, framework plan)</li> <li>» Private protest archive of allotment gardener</li> <li>» Own photographs</li> </ul>
<b>Case Copenhagen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Juridical documents (national allotment garden law 2001, its updated versions of 2006 and 2013, and accompanying strategy paper by the Environmental Ministry in Denmark)</li> <li>» Appraisal policy document</li> <li>» Own photographs</li> </ul>

Table 5: List of collected field documents

Part of my research consisted of studying field documents related to the legal framework of allotment gardens, objects and activities (see paper 5) or official planning documents related to the redevelopment projects that I used to gain insights into the case's history. Reading documents also served as a way to validate and nuance the interviews and as interpretative support against the interviewee's presented narratives.

I furthermore documented the personal protest archive of one gardener in Hamburg and created visual documentation of the material space by taking several photographs. I took many pictures depicting material tensions or changes related to redevelopments within the site or close-by (see papers 1-3 for examples): torn-down houses, dug-up plants, building fences in Hamburg, new public paths in Hamburg, bordering housing developments in Basel. I also took pictures showing allotment gardens as lived spaces and how gardeners relate to them (pictures of the huts, of vegetables, of trees, of gardening objects), as well as pictures of tensions between the conceived space of planners and the lived spaces of gardeners (protest documents hung up on fences and trees, for instance). These pictures recording material transformation became an important analytical source for paper 2 on materiality and affect.

#### 4.4.4. Field notes and analytical strategies

The following activities helped me analyse the material I collected:

- (1) Writing of field notes and protocols
- (2) Discussion amongst peers
- (3) Reading of theory

As already mentioned, I wrote down observation notes as "scratch notes" (Sanjek 1990) during field stays; this could be a sentence someone said or an interaction I observed.

During my recorded interviews, I would note keywords that the interviewee mentioned on my printed list of questions, which guided the further questions I asked. I kept these different scratch notes because I felt they already presented a first, very rough and intuitive coding of the material made *while* I was collecting the data. I therefore consider the first steps of data analysis already part of the data collection, rather than as a separate activity. Within days of these field visits, I extended the notes into more elaborated protocols.

I wrote interview protocols for the majority of my recorded interviews that consisted of summaries of what the interviewee had said, with interesting sentences transcribed word by word. Selected interviews that I considered rich in information and categories I transcribed in more detail. I also kept a Word document that I labelled “research diary” where I noted down ideas or thoughts related to my research, most entries consisting of only a few sentences or even just words, that I read as traces of my thought processes. On February 4<sup>th</sup> 2016, for example, I noted simply “Besitzverhältnisse”.

My research therefore produced a range of different field notes, varying in tone and detail of descriptions. The more detailed descriptions – the interview transcripts and protocols, the observation protocols – I would use for my second analytical activity: the discussion and interpretation of the material with peers. In order to get different views on my material, I discussed and coded interview protocols and transcript as well as protocols of field events with peers from different national, institutional and disciplinary contexts during ten interpretation meetings. These fruitful meetings were helpful also for getting a different view on any research or field frustrations I was experiencing: talking to one of my interpretation peers about my frustrations that the former association leader in Hamburg did not want to talk about his experiences with me, I realised, for example, that this failed field-access was providing me with important information on the relationship between the former association leader and the allotment garden city representative. Experiencing this failed access also made me view the willingness of my other Hamburg informants to talk to me in a new light and understand the interview situations as moments where ownership relations between gardeners and the wider public that I represented were being narrated and constructed. As part of this process, other narratives were being pushed: when I asked activist and new association leader Peter for help in setting up an interview with the former association leader, he politely declined to do so. Discussing this in more detail in chapter 5, I argue this is related to how the activists’ success required the suppression of other forms of civic solidarity, which the activists had an interest in keeping contained.

My third analytical strategy – the reading of different theory – cut across my entire research. I avoided, like Flyvbjerg (2006) describes, to link my research to theories coming only from one academic discipline, and instead read works discussing urban valuation disputes coming from different academic angles, such as literature on the anthropology of planning conflicts, political ecology works on environmental justice and green gentrification, and pragmatist literature on valuation compromises. Each introduced me to a different vocabulary and different way of framing urban greenspace phenomena, which explains why my research uses not one clearly cut disciplinary vocabulary.

Writing field notes, reading theory, discussing with peers – all these were important analytical activities. However, just as important was my on-going silent dialogue and engagement with my field and material. These “head notes” (Sanjek 1990) that are not written down on a piece

of paper I understand as the personal and intuitive motor driving and guiding my research – the latent base on which the manifest writings are built.

#### **4.5. Ethical concerns: Field responsibilities**

Even though my research was not an ethnographic study, I was influenced by ethnographic methodology, especially when it came to reflecting on my involvement with the field. Attending internal meetings, revisiting informants several times, my field interactions were framed by my interests as a researcher, which, as I will elaborate now, had elements of an asymmetrical researcher-informant relationship, but also went beyond this.

Certain conditions supported an analytical distance: neither was I part of one of the gardening associations, institutional organisations or related urban-agricultural movements before I started my research, nor did I aim to become so. Though I was interested in questions of power asymmetries and positions that were excluded in the found valuation compromises, I did not understand my research as an explicit support of marginalised groups or spaces (Bischoff 2014). Rather, I tried to approach the variously involved groups and interests with the same amount of analytical distance.

In reality, this neatly defined analytical stance and non-partisan researching role looked more complex. My research stays were marked by continuous, mostly subtle, negotiations of my role, with field members in various ways trying to make sense and give meaning to my researching presence. After a group interview with several of the protest group members in Hamburg, the questions turned explicitly to me, with the interviewees asking about the state of my research process and my exact thesis title in what I perceived was an inquisitive tone. Other times, by being asked to help out with specific favours, my researching presence got another layer of meaning, useful for the field itself: one association board member in Basel, for example, asked me to provide her with my audio-recordings of a previous meeting, where the municipal stakeholder had made financial promises they had no further documentation of. A municipal stakeholder in Basel asked me to send her documents related to environmental policies in Danish allotment gardens that she hoped to use for her work. In Hamburg, when I attended the field event “Garden State” at Kampnagel Theater, where some of the allotment activists were talking about their experiences to a small audience, I was asked to join not only as an observer, but also as speaker and introduce my research. These are examples where I was asked to contribute to a situation in a small, concrete way, in a way I considered not threatening to my researching role or my relationship with informants.

More difficult, and of more ethical concern to me, was the question of how to engage with the displacement threat of the Basel association, and the association members’ hope that my research could influence the municipality’s redevelopment plan – a hope I distanced myself from, but which continued to impact how I interacted with the field and the field interacted with me. At the last association meeting in Basel that I attended, where logistical aspects of the pending displacement were discussed amongst the association members, gardener Brigitte came up to me and told me how happy she was to see me. She urged that we should stay in touch but also expressed her disappointment that my research had not been able to change the

pending displacement. During this interaction, we both re-negotiated my research and our relationship: Brigitte by trying to give it a different meaning, expressing emotional worth from having interacted with me over several years; me by expressing how I felt empathy with their loss, doing the same. And yet, this short interaction demonstrated to me that our relationship was fundamentally asymmetric: while I had been able to gain new insight as I had hoped to, the gardeners had not benefitted from my presence in the way they had hoped. This fundamental asymmetry I could not resolve. Adding to my ambivalence, my research had given me insights into the complex role of allotment gardens as both a “club good” for gardeners and a publicly owned “common good” for the wider urban citizens. This realization of allotment gardens’ complex nature made me aware of the civic groups excluded from the current ownership regime. Thus, how I perceived my ethical role shifted with the way my research progressed and how I re-framed my research interest: from taking a normative stance of perceiving allotment gardeners’ as one unified group being oppressed towards a more fine-grained understanding of new greenspace solidarities emerging in all cases.

#### **4.6. Saturation and transferability: Reframing of descriptions**

I started this research with the aim of generating “thick descriptions” (Geertz 1993) of the cases that I studied, hoping for transferability and that my case-study knowledge could be used to understand urban greening disputes in other cities, too. This aim for transferability influenced my research choices: I chose a comparative study and triangulation of methods, contextualising the material with literature from different disciplines and through discussion with peers from heterogeneous academic backgrounds. These strategies helped me approach my cases from different angles, allowed me to move the research object around and place it in different settings, thereby extending my understanding of it.

It also brought along the difficult challenge, though, to access and engage with three cases in three different nations as well as to create a coherent, written product based on heterogeneous sources, materials and cases on different scales. The decision to write a paper-based dissertation, that supports plural narratives, is a direct consequence of this approach.

Theorists with a quantitative background often discuss case-study research as problematic in terms of generability, reliability and validity. I share qualitative methodologist Halkier’s (2011) approach to generability. She argues it needs to be understood in other terms when it comes to qualitative research: not in statistic or quantitative ways, but rather in ways thick descriptions can be reframed to be of analytical value for other research fields and analytical inquiries. In this sense, my own lens focusing on ownership arrangements proved not only valuable for understanding the valuation shifts and tensions in the studied context of allotment gardens, but might also be applied to study urban valuation shifts shaping the neoliberal city, presenting a novel layer to understanding spatial dynamics.

In sum, employing different methods and collecting diverse data allowed me to explore valuation tensions from different angles. Conducting interviews gave me insights into the familiar engagement of allotment gardeners, the planned and justificatory engagement of politicians and planners, and the coordinators linking the engagement types. By attending

association meetings, I understood the different democratic regimes the association employed and how these were related to the class background of its members. Spending physical time in the fields enabled me to explore the material structure, how ease and ownership was bodily experienced. Finally, studying planning and juridical documents gave me insights into governance arrangements as well as validating the interviews.

Of the many moments and situations I spent in the field, certain ones proved central to understanding my case. In Copenhagen, my communication with the Central Association leader and my failed attempts to be granted access to the bi-annual congress as an observer was mirrored in my attempts to arrange an interview with the former association leader in Hamburg. In both cases my research interest did not justify or grant admission to the desired situations. Meanwhile, the middle-class activist gardeners in Hamburg and one board-member in Copenhagen, himself of left middle-class background with green values, eagerly shared his knowledge with me.

In a similar manner, attending both the “Garden State” festival and the annual allotment garden festivity in Hamburg within days of each other turned out to be a critical moment in my research. After spending several hours joining the organised courses as an observer, witnessing the activities and talking to other attendees, I started to get annoyed and impatient, as if something crucial was absent, yet I did not know what. Why was I annoyed with what was going on? It was a bright summer day and people were enjoying themselves. Only when I compared it to my experience at the Kampnagel Theater a few days later did I realise why. At Garden State, the political aspects of gardens, their public worth, took centre stage. At the yearly festivity, there was no mentioning of the political aspects of allotment gardens; neither were recent contestations mentioned or activists invited, nor the public worth of gardens presented or discussed in any way – the wider civic was not present. Both experiences led me on track to understanding how different class-based solidarities were being negotiated within the field of allotment gardens, and different relations between the association body, the wider civic and public landowners were co-existing.

## 5. Results

This thesis is a cumulative dissertation consisting of five papers presented in the thesis' second part. In chapter 5.1. I summarise the articles; in chapter 5.2. I “aggrandise” the papers’ main findings and case-based descriptions into one narrative. To extend the richness of the description, I include findings that are not part of the individual articles, showing how the compromise is implemented “on the ground” within the Hamburg case.

### 5.1. Summary of articles

**1: Thomas N (2020)** Urbane Kleingärten im Fokus von Stadtentwicklung: Übersetzungen eines mehrschichtigen Stadtraumes. In: *Suburban Journal for critical urban studies* 8(1): 11 – 34.

This article analyses and compares how the allotment garden associations in Hamburg and Basel contested the municipal plans to redevelop the spaces into housing and brings this into dialogue with the material outcome. I show how the contestation stakeholders translated gardeners’ personal, intimate attachment to their garden plot into the language of commonality to justify why the publicly owned land should not be re-developed into much-needed housing, by drawing on Boltanski and Thévenot’s concept of orders of worth. I conceptualise two different translation strategies – “green translations” and “civic translations” – that each required the contestation stakeholders to activate different competences and resources and which led to compromises between planners and activists. I explore the consequences of the compromise to ask how the commonality that was created during the translation acts was later redrawn and adapted to legitimise contradicting actions. Findings from this paper are presented in chapters 5.2.3 and 5.2.4., where I discuss contestation strategies, compromises and the link between both.

**2: Thomas N (forthcoming)** Gehen durch urbane Landschaftsräume: Die Spaziergangswissenschaft als Methode. In: Berr K and Feldhusen S (eds) *Forschungen der Landschaftsarchitekturtheorie*. Berlin: Springer Verlag, p. 1 – 16.

This peer-reviewed book chapter is a methodological reflection on my use of mobile methods such as walking interviews and strollology, with which I explored the material-affectual dimensions of the case study associations in Hamburg and Basel. I situate the mobile methods within an existing body of phenomenological literature, such as Lucius Burckhardt and John Wylie. Based on my own empirical material and methodological reflections on how to integrate mobile methods into urban research, I develop three typologies: “Einführendes Spaziergehen”, “Kombiniertes Spaziergehen” and “Selektives Spaziergehen”.

Following these methodological descriptions, I present empirical results related to the material-affectual dimensions of allotment gardens, the material changes related to the redevelopment, and how these are challenging the intimate character of the spaces. Findings from this paper are presented in chapter 5.2.5, where I discuss new tensions related to green interventions in the form of new pathways leading through allotment sites.

**3: Thomas N (2018) Moving towards a green tomorrow. Urban Allotment Gardens and the “new green city”. In: *Journal of Communication and Language* 48: 123 – 143.**

In this descriptive article I retrace the planning process of the Hamburg case in its defining stages: from the moment the redevelopment plans were made public, to the moment a compromise between protesters and the municipalities was negotiated and agreed upon, to the moment the material landscape was changed by construction work. I conceptualise these different process stages as “imaginative action”, “planning action” and “materializing action”. I end by discussing the compromise and whether it is a sign that municipal stakeholders are becoming more aware of the green and emotional values associated with civic greenspaces and how to include them with municipal restructuring plans.

Chapters 5.2.3. and 5.2.4. are partly based on findings from this article as well as from paper 4 below.

**4: Thomas N, Oehler P and Drilling M (2016) The Power of the Many. The fight for allotment gardens in Basel, Switzerland. In: *The Nordic Journal for Architectural Research* 28(3): 97 – 117.**

This article analyses how the Basel Central Association of allotment gardens, following the publication of Basel municipality’s plans to redevelop approximately half of all allotment-garden land in the city in the early 2010s, contested the plans and how a compromise was agreed upon by public referendum. Together with my co-authors Patrick Oehler and Matthias Drilling, I show how the new law, introduced following the referendum to stabilise the compromise, provides new opportunities to re-assemble the governing culture, material order and social composition of allotment gardens. I link these results to Richard Sennett’s theory of flexibilisation and ask whether we are witnessing the beginnings of the flexibilisation of allotment gardens’ democratic representative structures that will weaken a powerful civic stakeholder.

**5: Thomas N and Blok A. Contested green-space solidarities? Asymmetric valuation compromises and civic-material tensions in Copenhagen allotment gardens. Manuscript, 1 – 25.**

The final article analyses the challenges allotment gardens in Copenhagen are currently facing, and situates this within its governance-arrangements and Copenhagen’s wider

urbanism changes since the 1990s. Together with my co-author Anders Blok, I argue that the relationship between the municipality and the civic body of the Central Organisation of allotment gardens is shaped by a set of what we conceptualise as “civic-green” and “civic-market” compromises. Connecting the analysis with the framework of a pragmatic sociology of urbanism, I show how these “asymmetric” compromises are leading to new tensions that are based on different, contradicting understandings of fairness and differently framed civic solidarities that are mirroring the wider urbanism shifts in Copenhagen. Findings from this article are present in chapter 5.2.1., 5.2.2. and 5.2.5.

## **5.2. What is this actually a case of? De-stabilised and re-arranged ownership**

### ***5.2.1. Allotment gardens: Complex ownership arrangements***

Several scholars describe allotments as ambiguous spaces that fall between existing spatial conceptions such as public or private space, or between activities of production, consumption and recreation (e.g. Lawson 2004; DeSilvey 2003; Crouch and Ward 1988). Based on my research and analysis, I argue that taking a closer look at the complex ownership arrangement in relation to value generation gives new insights into the ambiguity.

Each of the studied cases is situated within its own political and institutional setting that determines the exact ownership arrangements; in Basel and Copenhagen, the municipality, for example, directly rents out the plots to gardeners, while in Hamburg the municipality rents out the land to the civic umbrella organisation of the Central Association of Allotment Gardens, who then sublet the plots further. Despite these differences, the overall arrangement principle is the same in all cases, with the municipality being the owner of the land<sup>11</sup> who temporarily transfers the rights to use the land to a third party. The individual gardeners are the renters of the land, but own the objects located on the plot, such as trees, plants, the gardening house and its interior; when gardeners give up their plot, they sell their property to the next renter. This price is regulated by official appraisal rules; owners are not allowed to sell their house for a price above the official appraisal height to ensure they stay affordable. Allotment gardeners are therefore both owners and renters of materiality at the same time.

A civic structure oversees and coordinates how gardeners engage with the land: each gardener is required to be member of the sites’ association, which in turn is member of the CA, who coordinate between the municipalities’ as well as the associations’ and gardeners’ spatial engagements.

The way gardeners engage with their plot can have various civic and green impacts: if a gardener for instance built a house on the entire plot, this would impact the green value of the

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<sup>11</sup> In each city, some allotment gardens fall under a different ownership regime, with the land for example belonging to a state organization such as the national railway company or non-profit charities. Such cases, however, were not included in this thesis which focused explicitly on municipally-owned land. This decision was made deliberately, since I was interested in how various actors engaged with the municipally-owned land in a way that Laurent Thévenot (2011, 2014) calls “engaging with justification for the common good”.

land, as well as impacting the neighbours’ plot. The same applies if gardeners let their plot grow wild: the next renter taking over the plot will have to invest a lot of labour if they prefer a more controlled garden aesthetic. Alternatively, if the municipal landowners decided to redevelop the land, they would need to pay for the removal of all green and built structures, translating to financial costs. These examples illustrate how values never exist in isolation, but are related and impact each other, which explains why allotment gardens are regulated in great detail: for each case study, different juridical documents regulate and coordinate<sup>12</sup> the relationship between different actors’ spatial engagements and the way gardeners can engage with different spatial values in relation to their garden plot (see table 6).

<i>Green Worth</i>	<i>Material Worth</i>	<i>Financial Worth</i>	<i>Civic Worth</i>	<i>Domestic Worth</i>	<i>Industrial Worth</i>
Perennials, green-pollution	House size, electrical equipment	House-appraisal rules, land rent	Association structure, social activities, allocation practices	Social and physical access rights	Implementation, monitoring and policing of regulations; redevelopment rights

Table 6: Examples of areas of regulations

The juridical framework in all cases regulates allotment gardens’ material and green worth by, for example, limiting the legal size of the gardening hut (20 m<sup>2</sup> in Basel and Hamburg, 60 m<sup>2</sup> in Copenhagen), which perennials can be planted (no forest trees in Hamburg and Basel for instance, and trees limited to two metres height), how high hedges and fences can be and how to dispose of polluted water. It stabilises the civic structure by stating that each gardener must become a member of the association, and limits financial worth by binding members to appraisal rules decided by the municipality and the Central Association to ensure affordable prices. Access to the site and plot is regulated, as is noise.

Together, these various rules weave a web of relations between gardeners, associations and municipalities, where different spatial engagements as well as individual, collective and public forms of ownerships are coordinated with each other. The following quote by gardener Andreas in Basel illustrates how this co-existing plurality is experienced and translated to powerful expressions of individual ownership transcending any temporality inscribed in rental contracts: *“This is mine! Even if it is rented, it is MINE! As long as it adheres to the legal rules. I can do what I want, as long as I don’t disturb anyone with noise or smell or I don’t know what, here I can do what I WANT!”*

In each of the cases, however, coordination gaps in practice led to different civic groups’ spatial engagement being in conflict with each other: in Basel and Hamburg, for example, tensions centred around civic and green values, with the new middle-class users – I refer to

<sup>12</sup> In Basel, the local allotment garden law, introduced in 2013, as well as the local garden policy are the main regulative instruments. In Hamburg these are the national allotment garden law (introduced in 1983) and the local allotment garden policy from 2019; in Copenhagen the national allotment garden law (since 2001) and the Central Association’s appraisal-policy are the central governing instruments. How these sets of regulations are put into practice, varies and depends for instance on how associations and gardeners perceive – and perform – the presence of the state (for more on this see Hilbrandt 2017). Here I focus on the official regulations that are stabilised through law, and not on the question of how these are implemented.

them as “green gardeners” – preferring a wilder garden aesthetic and participatory democratic understanding than the traditional more working-class users, whom I refer to as “civic gardeners”. In Copenhagen, tensions between green and civic gardeners centred on material and financial values and the question of how large huts should be and how high the price could be set. Despite these tensions, when it comes to the individual gardeners’ engagement with their plot, all gardeners I spoke to expressed their intimate attachments with the green and material values of their plot that are both an expression of as well as resulting from repeated practices of *doing and feeling* care. In this sense, allotment gardens are membership-based “commonplaces in the plural” as conceptualised by Thévenot (2011) which, despite differences between gardeners’ spatial engagements, allow multiple affinities and different ways of engaging with green, material and civic values.

An intrinsic part of the ownership arrangements in all cases is the land-owning municipality’s right to dissolve the rental contracts and redevelop the land for common good purposes, under certain locally specified conditions.<sup>13</sup> These conditions have since changed, but at the time of the cases’ redevelopment conflicts, the municipal landowners could redevelop allotment gardens without having to compensate the gardeners for their green or material values. In other words, no financial costs were associated with this development, making this a lucrative option if land was needed for municipal development projects.

Thus, the plurality of engagement goes both ways: not only do gardeners engage in different ways with the spaces’ values, so too does the municipal landowner. The latter both supports and allows the growth of green, material and civic values connected to allotment garden use by renting out the land, thereby saving on maintenance costs. They can, however, also disallow it, oppress the gardeners’ spatial engagement and replace the ownership arrangement with another one, by selling the land, for instance. The gardeners’ experience of ownership is therefore based on fragile grounds and an asymmetric relationship between the public owners and private renters, where the decision-making regarding the spaces’ long-term future is unequally distributed. How this asymmetric relationship was problematized when in the 1990s all three cities attempted to shift their way of engaging with allotment gardens, and how this was related to wider urbanism shifts, the next section will briefly describe.

### ***5.2.2. Redevelopment plans: Contradicting visions of sustainable urban planning***

The studied valuation conflicts in Hamburg, Basel and Copenhagen in the past 10-20 years are related to post-industrial large-scale redevelopment projects (see table 7), located, with the exception of the Hamburg case, at the periphery of the city. In order to contextualise the

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<sup>13</sup> In Copenhagen, for example, the national garden law states that the construction of housing or business enterprises is not to be considered a common good and therefore cannot legitimize the re-transferral of user right; this explicit exclusion of practices from being considered common good is not the case in Basel or Hamburg. In Hamburg, the national allotment garden law furthermore states that the municipal landowner can dissolve the rental contract before the redevelopment plan has been accepted in parliament. In each city, the redevelopment requires the public landowner to offer financial compensation for the renters’ green and material values and a replacement plot for plots located within protected sites. These replacement measures are a relatively new development and the results of the valuation-conflict and resulting compromises described in more detail later.

valuation conflicts, I now give a short overview over the projects, how they are related with the cities' shift towards entrepreneurial and sustainability policies in the past two decades, and how interviewed municipal planners engaged with the plans and its contradictions.

	<i>Case Basel</i>	<i>Case Hamburg</i>	<i>Case Copenhagen</i> <sup>14</sup>
<i>Redevelopment Stakeholder</i>	Basel Municipality	District Barmbek-Nord	Region Copenhagen
<i>Redevelopment Project</i>	New housing projects	Pergolenviertel Project (housing, public space, new allotment gardens)	Ørestad Project (metro, housing, public space business, education, cultural facilities)
<i>Affected allotment garden associations</i>	3 (approx. 1100 plots, 20ha)	2 (330 plots, approx. 32ha)	No information
<i>Redevelopment Tools</i>	Kantoner Richtplan 2010 Zonenplanrevision 2011	Flächennutzungsplan 1997 Bebauungsplan 2012	Planning Act 1992 Regional Plan 1997
<i>City Policy</i>	Social- entrepreneurial	Social- entrepreneurial	Green-entrepreneurial

Table 7: Overview of the case studies' redevelopment projects

The Pergolenviertel housing project in the district of Barmbek-Nord in Hamburg is currently establishing 1400 high-density apartments, new public greenspaces and new allotment gardens on approx. 32 ha publicly owned land which previously was rented out to two gardening associations located approximately six kilometres from the city centre (Bezirksamt Barmbek-Nord 2012). In Basel, the revision of the municipal framework plan in the early 2010s identified three new redevelopment areas on 20 ha of publicly owned land, also currently rented out to allotment associations, where approx. 1800 high density apartments were to be created (Bau- und Verkehrsdepartment des Kantons Basel Stadt 2012). In Copenhagen, the Ørestad development project of the early 2000s created the new metro linking the city centre with the airport, a new transportation corridor to Sweden, business, cultural and educational facilities as well as 40 ha of new housing (Majoor 2008).

The redevelopments differ in scale and size – from regional level in Copenhagen, to municipal level in Basel and district level in Hamburg, but all are connected to each city's entrepreneurial as well as sustainability goals since the 1990s (see Rinn 2018 for Hamburg; Blok and Meilvang 2015 for Copenhagen; Oehler and Drilling 2010 for Basel), following decades of out-migration of wealthier citizens to the suburbs. Simply put, in all cities, municipalities decided to invest into new housing, infrastructure and public spaces in order to make the cities more attractive again for higher-income citizens.

These new investment strategies translated to different sustainability strategies, which impacted how planners approached and valued urban allotment gardens. As I elaborate in paper 1, in Hamburg and Basel new municipal housing strategies based on the idea of social sustainability and the need to create new affordable housing for the new urban middle-classes

<sup>14</sup> My Copenhagen case focuses on contemporary tensions and valuation disputes in Copenhagen not directly related to a current redevelopment conflict. These tensions are, however, in various ways the consequence of past conflicts connected to the Ørestad project and how this was resolved. For this reason I have decided to include it in this table.

(see Präsidi­al­de­part­ment des Kantons Basel-Stadt 2011, Wohnungsbauprogramm Bezirk Hamburg Nord 2019) was the driving force behind the redevelopment projects.

At the same time, however, in both cities the municipalities had agreed to value and expand urban greenspaces. Environmental planning documents included allotment gardens as part of the urban greenspace stock (see Zemp 1996; Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg 2010), which demonstrated that the redevelopment of these spaces contradicted with the green sustainability vision.

This contradiction that allotment gardens could be valued in different ways was present during my interviews with urban planners for all of my cases: In Copenhagen, one interviewed municipal planner defended the planned redevelopment of one allotment site into housing since it was linked to the flagship sustainability-metro-project of the early 2000s, but later in the interview emphasised the importance of allotments for the city's greenspace provision. In Hamburg, an involved landscape architect expressed his ambivalence between the green value of allotment gardens and the strong development pressure resting on allotment gardens that could help counteract the housing pressure. In Basel, planners argued that the redevelopment of allotment gardens was needed due to scarcely available public construction land and in order to prevent a severe housing shortage in the future, with the local housing minister expressing the contradictions the following way: *“We could theoretically say, yes excellent, now we can cover them in concrete and build apartments on top, but I think the city would lose quite a lot of quality if we did that.”*

Not only interviewed stakeholders, but also official planning documents that justify the redevelopment projects by describing how the projects are linked to the idea of the common good and the good city of the future, express contradictory worths and different visions of “green” and “grey” visions of sustainability (Wachsmuth and Angelo 2018).<sup>15</sup>

Planning documents thus connect different visions of sustainability to allotment garden spaces, justifying the redevelopment of selected sites by promising the protection and upgrading of other sites.

Those sites allowed to remain are however subjected to various material interventions (see papers 4 and 5).

The interviewed municipal stakeholders talked in detail about the various intervention possibilities, justifying the need for interventions with a general rising pressure on urban greenspaces. A closer analysis of how various stakeholders talked about the interventions showed they included social boundary-drawings – certain civic groups were presented as undesired, others, currently not targeted by the organizational culture or required garden labour of allotment gardens, as desired. In both Basel and Hamburg, planners framed elderly groups and low-skilled workers with a migration background as undesired, while the new urban middle-classes of young families with green values were civic groups planners had in mind when they developed intervention strategies, thus building up new civic solidarities.

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<sup>15</sup> In Basel, the municipal frame-work plan (Bau- und Verkehrsdepartment des Kantons Basel Stadt 2010: 37) for example stated that *“allotment garden areas are to be partially opened into a commonly accessible urban greenspace as well be rezoned into construction sites, an adequate amount of allotment gardens is to be protected in the long run.”* The Hamburg zoning-plan (Bezirksamt Barmbek-Nord 2012) meanwhile stated: *“In order to realise affordable housing the goal was to provide a framework for urban and infrastructural developments. Not less important was the goal to re-construct at least 150 allotment gardens in a new spatial design on 6 ha.”*

These groups are presented as desirable not only due to their market and green worth, but also due to their more flexible spatial engagements, whereby their spatial ease is less plot-based. The fact that traditional civic gardeners are strongly attached to their plot and materiality on it was something planners were increasingly wary of. One interviewed planner in Hamburg for instance problematized the strong attachments of civic gardeners by arguing it was hindering material restructurings and new developments.

In all three cases, the municipalities are supporting and demanding material interventions that are oriented towards new middle-class user groups, for whom new housing is currently created, and who are drawn to gardens less for reasons of food-support and more for reasons of leisure and recreation. They are aligning the allotments with the new middle classes, who have been attracted to the cities due to the labour and housing opportunities related to the entrepreneurial policies of the past 20-30 years. This is supported by the problematization of the existing, less resourceful gardeners, both in terms of their social and geographical background (the fact that several have a migration background, or, as is the case in Basel, are unable to afford living in the city anymore and thus live in the agglomeration, which is part of another municipality) as well as their spatial engagement being criticised for being too strongly attached to their own plot.

### 5.2.3. *Contestations: Solidarities being tested*

	<i>Case Basel</i>	<i>Case Hamburg</i>	<i>Case Copenhagen</i>
<i>Critical Moment</i>	Municipal zoning-plan revision	Pergolenviertel redevelopment plan	Ørestad redevelopment plan
<i>Stakeholders</i>	Basel Central Association of Allotment Gardens	Protest group	Danish Central Association of Allotment Gardens
<i>Justification Mode</i>	Civic worth	Green worth	Civic worth
<i>Testing Arenas</i>	Political (Municipal Referendum)	Juridical (District Court)	Political (National Parliament)
<i>Democratic Mode</i>	Representation	Participation	Representation
<i>Resources</i>	Institutional civic solidarities	New green solidarities	Institutional civic solidarities

Table 8: Overview of the case studies' contestation arrangements

What followed after the publication of the redevelopment plans in each case was what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 224) call “clashes”, where “the discord [...] has to do not simply with the worth of the beings present, but with the very identification of the beings that matter [...] and the common good to which reference may be made to reach agreement.”

In each city, different protesting stakeholders tried to re-frame the situation, thereby bringing in new principles of justice and demanding new tests of worth more suitable for fair judgements. Since the land was publicly owned, the contesters of the redevelopment plans had to justify why the protection of their personal affinities to the gardens were worthy from the viewpoint of the common good, and which testing arenas were suitable for deciding between the common-good arguments put forward by the contesters and those put forward by municipal planners (see paper 1). In other words, contesters had to engage in “justification for the common good” (Thévenot 2011, 2014).

Two different ways of engaging in justification for the common good were present in the cases, related to different political cultures but also to the scale of the redevelopment projects. In Basel and Copenhagen, contesters engaged in what I conceptualised as “civic translations”. Here, contestation stakeholders were institutional: the Central Association of Allotment Gardens on a municipal level in Basel and on a national level in Denmark (see papers 4 and 5). The testing of different solidarities was carried out in different, nationally specific arenas. In grass-roots democratic Switzerland, it took place in the form of a civic referendum followed by a city-wide election; in the welfare-state of Denmark, the national parliament were asked to vote on a new allotment-garden law that had been worked out by the Environmental Ministry on behalf of the CA. Both tests were based on a representative democratic mode: the direct citizen vote in Basel, the vote of elected mandates in Copenhagen. Both relied on institutional civic solidarities: in Basel, the Central Association coordinated municipal gardeners for their cause; in Denmark, the National Environmental Ministry coordinated social-democratic politicians since in Denmark, allotment gardeners are strongly associated with the social-democratic party. I argue that solidarity with allotment gardeners as a historically resource-low civic group and their political representatives was the driving force behind the contestation in Basel and Copenhagen, with the quantitative majority deciding the conflict.

Hamburg was a different case. Here, not institutional actors, but a group of middle-class gardeners I refer to as green gardeners contested the plans by referring to the green worth of the site as being a common good, engaging in what I conceptualise in paper 1 as “green translations”. They did not rely on institutional solidarities – in fact, civic gardeners did not engage in the protest – but rather tried to create new solidarities with urban citizens with green values and middle-class backgrounds, as well as activate non-human actors such as animals, flora and fauna in their protesting efforts.

They followed a participatory understanding of democracy: even if they did not have the majority of Hamburg’s voting citizens to support them, their demands still deserved to be taken into consideration.

Contesting the plans on the ground of environmental impacts and what they argued where procedural injustices, their tests took place in juridical arenas. Despite not holding institutional power like the protesting actors in Copenhagen and Basel did, they held a different kind of power: they were able to delay planning processes by putting pressure on redevelopment stakeholders to respond to arguments and supportive figures and illustrations of green worth. Furthermore, they engaged with the media and gave emotional accounts of the spaces’ green and inspired worth for all citizens by drawing upon a general impression of a pressurised society and city and employing the sensual argument of the spaces being a “breathing space”, thus creating a kind of “sensual commonality” of allotment gardens.

In all cases, the municipal planners disagreed with the contestation and defended the civic solidarity connected to their redevelopment plans, arguing the testing situations were “impure” because they contained domestic worths in a situation where only civic worth should count: in Basel, one interviewed municipal planner criticised the contesting Central Association’s lack of public justifications (*“no arguments were put forward, they simply said:*

*no, we don't want this to happen*”). In Hamburg, planners framed gardeners’ strong attachment, their green and material values as illegitimate due to the fragile ownership arrangement that should have prevented this (*“Allotment gardeners never saw their obligation to inform themselves, they just were pleased about the low rent and built large garden huts and invested a lot, thinking ‘the municipality is too lazy to put this plan into practice’.”*). In Copenhagen, too, the test was considered unfair because it took place shortly before national elections, where domestic worth and domestic solidarities pushed politicians’ solidarities with other civic groups such as the civic addressees of the Ørestad project and connected new metro infrastructure, into the background.

Only the redevelopment plan and its defenders acted in a “natural” way of civic worth, in the planners’ opinion.

The contestation in each case was thus an effort to bring forward new tests of worth, challenging the worth behind the redevelopment plans and demanding a new judgement made by actors supposedly representing the wider civic and the common good: people themselves, their elected representatives, or judges. The principle of equivalence and the understanding of fairness differed: from the worth of working-class allotment gardeners and what they represented (Basel, Copenhagen), to the worth of flora and fauna which activists in Hamburg pushed into the foreground (see paper 1). Different ideas of solidarities, based on either civic or green worth, therefore shaped the outcome of the cases.

#### 5.2.4. *Compromises: Stabilising new greenspace solidarities*

	<i>Case Basel</i>	<i>Case Hamburg</i>	<i>Case Copenhagen</i>
<i>Tools</i>	Municipal allotment garden law	Land-use plan	National allotment garden law
<i>Compromise Stakeholders</i>	Housing minister, municipal electorate	CA, external planners	Environmental minister, national parliament
<i>Rescaling of Redevelopment Plans</i>	50% (10 ha, approx. 500 dwellings)	Reduction of restructured plot numbers by estimated 20%	No information
<i>Green interventions</i>	Housing, Public paths, public spaces, leisure activities	Housing, Public paths, new plot structure	Public paths
<i>Material interventions</i>	Electricity	Electricity, Water	Canalisation
<i>Financial interventions</i>	Financial compensation and replacement offer	Financial compensation and replacement offer	Financial compensation and replacement offer

Table 9: Overview of the case studies compromise arrangements

In Basel and Copenhagen, institutional solidarities and democratic political processes were employed to decide the conflict (see papers 4 and 5).

In Basel, the contestation of the city-wide redevelopment plans led to negotiation talks between the municipal redevelopment interests and the Central Association’s interests to keep all gardens. These talks, stretching over weeks, led to a compromise in the sense of Boltanski

and Thévenot (2006): it was accepted that allotment gardens could be both financially valuable (the position of the municipality) and of domestic worth (the position of the Central Association), finding a way that both worths could co-exist. The municipal housing minister described it the following way: *“The political approach in the end was a very simple one: we gave in in those areas where there was a big win for allotment gardens but only a small one for us in terms of additional apartment numbers, but we insisted in those areas where the apartment wins were very big and the loss of allotment gardens relatively small.”*

As part of the compromise, the municipality promised to upgrade allotment gardens by installing electrical infrastructure on the plots. Internal conflicts within the Central Association itself, however, meant the referendum was not withdrawn and the electorate were asked to decide between the market worth of the redevelopment project, the domestic worth of the initial referendum or the domestic-market compromise, leading to the negotiated compromise getting most votes.

In Copenhagen, the options were more limited: national parliament could decide between approving the Environmental Ministry’s allotment garden law, or disapprove – they approved. In both cases, the introduction of a national allotment garden law in Denmark and a municipal allotment garden law in Basel, where previously neither had existed, solidified the agreement. In Denmark, the law aims to “ensure that allotment garden areas can continue to be a significant part of the urban population’s opportunities for recreation and activity in leisure time” (Danish Environmental Ministry 2001); in Basel, the municipality ensures the protection of an “adequate amount of allotment gardens within and beyond municipality’s borders for the municipality’s residents” (Grosser Rat des Kantons Basel-Stadt 2013). In both cases, the common good figures of the municipality’s general population justify the law’s existence, demonstrating Boltanski and Thévenot’s argument that figures of the common good lend themselves to compromises because of their ambiguous nature – who exactly the addressable city population is, how the agreement is implemented on the ground, which civic groups can have access, is left unsaid.

Both laws come with a set of rulings and arrangements on how to distribute the land’s green values between the gardeners and the wider urban population that I discuss regarding the Copenhagen case in paper 5. In both cases, allotment gardeners affected by future redevelopment must be financially compensated for the material and green property and offered a replacement plot somewhere else, translating to financial costs on behalf of the municipality and its civic taxpayers.

In both cases, however, the compromise also shows solidarity with the wider population by stating that allotment gardens need to build new public paths that can be accessible by the general population, as well as build and finance flood protection measurements (Copenhagen), and integrate new public greenspaces and activities (Basel). Thereby wider citizens as pedestrians can benefit from the sites being kept green as well as the sites helping to control expected climate challenges in Copenhagen.

In the Hamburg case, similar ideas to enlarge the civic groups that can benefit from the allotment gardens in various, mostly visual-sensual ways, were already present in the redevelopment project, which, too, included public pathways and new public greenspaces. In paper 2, I argue that these strategies of enabling visual and physical access to the previously fenced-in sites for new civic groups will re-arrange the ownership arrangements in the long run by linking new civic groups with allotment gardens’ green knowledge and experiences:

those new middle-class residents in the vicinity who see the green worth as pedestrians might be tempted to rent a plot themselves, bringing new resources into the sites. These interventions, attracting new civics, are therefore an integral part of long-term ownership changes.

### ***Hamburg: Retracing the compromise on the ground***

In order to discuss the compromise arrangement in Hamburg, we need to leave behind the situation found in Basel and Copenhagen. In both Copenhagen and Basel, the contestation took place in political arenas and involved a wider civic – directly in Basel, indirectly in Copenhagen – to decide on the issue. In both cases, the developed compromises – in Basel between the municipal Central Association and the Housing and Environmental Ministry, in Copenhagen between the National Central Association and the Environmental Ministry – was stabilised in law. Both cases differ in scale – municipal scale in Basel, national in Copenhagen – and democratic mode – direct in Basel, representative in Copenhagen – but based on similar civic solidarities.

In Hamburg, the scale differed: the redevelopment project affected one large allotment-garden site, the district being the driving force. While in Basel and Copenhagen all stakeholders agreed the issue was a political one and chose political testing arenas, in Hamburg, stakeholders disagreed. A small group of green, middle-class gardeners considered the issue a political one and tried to push the contestation into political arenas – they handed in an initiative and demanded that the district residents vote on the redevelopment project. But project stakeholders tried to avoid a referendum where district citizens would be allowed to judge the conflict and worth of the gardening spaces, thereby holding the power to halt the project, at all costs. They succeeded in this by getting the city government to raise the project responsibility from district to municipal level. The project now was considered of municipal importance, and hence the entire city-population would need to be asked to decide on the project, raising the level of civic resources needed in the form of signatures.

Thus, paradoxically, district stakeholders outmanoeuvred the activists and avoided the redevelopment becoming an issue of district politics, by making it an issue of municipal politics. The activists sued the district for this tactic and sued the redevelopment project on environmental protection grounds – moving the conflict into the arenas of the courts.

Just like the contestation arenas shifted, so too did the role of the activists: they attended the regular participation meetings that are required per planning law in Hamburg, and worked on the coordination between their personal spatial engagement with the municipality's engagement, as well as protesting against the project, employing co-existing roles as both activists and planning partners.

The court ruled in favour of the district and the redevelopment project; its stakeholders were given juridical sanction to go ahead as planned and change the ownership arrangement as intended. Thus, formally no changes were made to the project, but following the court decisions, informal changes led to a compromise between the activists' familiar engagement with their plots and the planners' engagement with the redevelopment plan.

The redevelopment project itself reads as a compromise between different worths, since it includes new housing with new public green spaces and new allotment gardens in three zones. The employed landscape planners were to restructure the zones, dividing the plots in an

efficient way to raise the total number to approx. 150-160 new plots, with affected allotment gardeners being able to get a replacement plot in the new zones if they wanted. Included in the process of restructuring was upgrading the plots by installing new electricity and water connections for each plot; soil control to guarantee it was free of undetonated weapons (legally required in Hamburg); and the removal of green and material structures not complying with the national garden law. These interventions were to ensure that the new allotment gardens adhered to the allotment law and could be integrated into the land-use plan, which would result in the gardens having their own zone and protection. These rules – the limitation to 400m<sup>2</sup> plot sizes, the control for undetonated weapons, the prohibition of certain green and material structures – made sure the interests of the wider civic were represented in the ownership arrangements that could justify the new protection and valuation. To control the ground for undetonated weapons would ensure no civilians were endangered by the construction work; to limit the size of houses and trees was to ensure the publicly owned plots were not appropriated by large, privately owned structures, and the limitation of the plot sizes was to ensure that the land was distributed amongst a larger civic group and no individuals were renting large plots of publicly owned land. These interventions, however, oppressed the green gardeners' way of engaging with their plots since the destruction of green and material values they cared for (and owned) was required, causing new conflicts between spatial engagements demanded by law and the spatial engagements of the green gardeners.

Also in this case, a compromise was agreed upon between the project stakeholders' and the activists' spatial engagements. Unlike in Basel and Copenhagen, the compromise was not the result of public debate and democratic decision-making, but rather the result of the following three coordination strategies of translating stakeholders:

- (1) Discourse coordination: the employment of external expertise to re-frame the situation
- (2) Legal coordination: the employment of common-good arguments
- (3) Material coordination by spatial translators

Landscape architect Tom, for instance, was such a spatial translator who translated the spatial engagements of the gardeners into a new restructuring design, taking the existing flora and fauna more into account, but resulting in less plots (the restructuring thus followed the domestic worth and not the civic worth, as had originally been planned). The Central Association meanwhile played a role as both legal and discursive coordinator, as the following quote demonstrates: *“We demanded that within the Pergolenviertel, all areas that remain allotment garden areas should stay the way they more or less are, so all green plans should be kept and the gardening huts kept as much as possible. In order to so, it was necessary to think of a different concept concerning the weapon control. And then we negotiated with the project leaders of the Pergolenviertel (...). We said, ‘Yes, well either you offer this to us, or we cannot dissolve the contract ahead of schedule’.”*

In sum, for all three cases, the compromises required complex negotiations and coordination between the gardeners' and the municipality's way of engaging with the space.

The compromises are stabilised through legal tools – the municipal and national allotment garden law in Basel and Copenhagen, the land-use plan in Hamburg. In all three cases, these

stabilizations required new green interventions addressing a wider public, such as public paths and new urban greenspaces that align allotment garden spaces in a new way with its urban surroundings – and, importantly, with the middle-class users living in these surroundings. The case of Hamburg, however, shows how on the micro scale these interventions can be coordinated to fit the spatial engagement of the green activist gardeners – that what is justified by referencing the common good contains at its core the familiar engagements of a group of middle-class green gardeners. This is leading to new tensions.

#### ***5.2.5. New ownership arrangements between exclusions and inclusions: Solidarity tensions emerging on the ground***

The past section described how in all three cities a compromise between the group of allotment gardeners and the municipality was negotiated and stabilised. In all cases the compromise settings contain what I conceptualise as grey, green and institutional interventions. In this final part and by referring to findings from papers 1, 2 and 5, I will discuss the impact of these interventions on ownership and worth regulations that I described earlier on, and why such changes are problematic.

What were the material consequences of the compromise? In Hamburg and Basel, the compromise involved public stakeholders redeveloping a part of the gardens. In Basel, this part was reduced by half (10 ha instead of 20 ha of gardens located within the city borders), in Hamburg, no changes were made to the size and amount of allotment garden land redeveloped into housing. In Copenhagen, negotiations took place on a state level and did not address concrete redevelopment projects.

The compromise in all three cases involved the municipality creating green and material interventions on those gardens not impacted by the redevelopment: the construction of public paths leading through allotment garden sites, in Basel and Hamburg also the creation of new public greenspaces. In all three cities, the municipality has upgraded and is upgrading allotment gardens by installing new electrical and water infrastructure (Hamburg and Basel) as well as canalisation infrastructure (Copenhagen). Finally, the compromise has led and is leading to changes in the institutional arrangements and association structures. All of these interventions are impacting ownership arrangement in new ways, leading to new civic inclusions and exclusions and solidarities.

In Hamburg and Basel, the agreement that several allotment gardens could be redeveloped impacted the civic worth of the gardens and solidarity amongst allotment gardeners. In Basel, the compromise was made possible largely on behalf of the “Dreisplitz” association: a relatively small association consisting of 96 renters, located in the booming district Gundeldinger Feld and in close proximity to the city’s prestigious new University Campus project, whose rental contract with the municipality was due to expire in a few years. The “Dreisplitz” association agreed to give up their gardens under certain conditions promised by the municipality: that the other larger associations could remain, they could stay for 10, in some cases for 15 more years and have their green and material investments financially

compensated. Driving force for their agreement was the civic solidarity with other allotment gardeners.

Meanwhile in Hamburg, solidarity amongst the gardeners was fragmented from the beginning due to the redevelopment plan itself that promised the construction of new housing areas, new public greenspaces and, importantly, 6ha of new allotment gardens in three new gardening zones. The redevelopment project already assembled different worths and therefore opened up new possibilities for green gardeners to defend their own attachments, for most of the activists' plots were located in one of the three new gardening zones.

The compromises led to new stabilised relationships between certain plots and certain gardeners that excluded others, causing new tensions. The "Dreisplitz" association had hoped others would acknowledge the role they played in creating a new stabilised relationship; when these acts of inclusion and solidarity never happened, anger and disappointment appeared.

In Hamburg, the compromise that most activists could keep their gardens caused resentment on civic grounds amongst the other gardeners, who felt the municipality were forming new exclusive solidarity bonds with the activists by letting them keep their plots, therefore treating plots and people differently. The activist gardeners meanwhile distanced themselves from this critique, justifying their plots' material protection with the green worth, not mentioning, however, that the replacement of the other gardeners was a calculated part of the compromise: the municipality feared the activists' contestation could endanger the redevelopment and housing construction; the agreement to protect those plots which the activists were attached to was an effort to contain their contestation and ensure the housing construction to continue.

In Hamburg and Basel, the municipalities' effort to protect the redevelopment project thus impacted how gardeners related to each other, causing friction and tension because not all gardeners and their plots were part of the compromise. I argue: in Basel and Hamburg, those civic gardeners who stood by the representative structures and the associations were the ones who both enabled as well as paid the *material* price for the compromise, by losing their plot and green and material values, for which, however, they were *financially* compensated.

### ***Green interventions: New public access***

In all three cases, municipal green interventions are part of the ownership re-arrangement compromise. The national allotment garden law in Denmark explicitly states that allotments on municipal land must allow the general public to access and walk on communal paths within the sites during the gardening season from March until September. The municipal allotment garden law in Basel states that public greenspaces and public leisure activities are to be integrated into the areas. The Pergolenviertel project in Hamburg includes the construction of new public pedestrian and bike paths, restructuring and densification of a limited amount of plots, as well as public greenspaces on the allotment garden area.

All of these interventions are demanded by the municipal landowners in order to expand the civic groups who use and attach themselves in different ways to the allotment garden spaces: since property legislation regulates and coordinates the relationship between landowners and renters – renters in general have the right to decide who can access their plot, for instance – municipalities intervene on vacant plots or communal paths.

These interventions thus re-arrange spatial ownership patterns, re-transferring the rights back from individual renters and the association members to the municipal landowner to be distributed amongst a wider civic.

In all cases, this re-arrangement is impacting allotment gardeners' intimate engagement with their plot and their material and green values, causing new tensions. With public access guaranteed, the borders (such as gates) that previously used to regulate who could physically enter the sites and that limited physical access to association members (and associates) are being changed. More members of the civic are present on the land. The following quote by gardener Margot in Hamburg illustrates the impact these green interventions are having on her way of engaging with her plot: *"If I could choose, I would immediately take my old plot [one of the plots that were redeveloped] again and move back; here I have neighbours everywhere. Back there, there was only W. and on the other side was a stone house that the owners only used as a weekend house. Here everything is so unprotected, there is no nice corner I could go and sit in. Back there I had all that."*

In addition to the increased visibility, gardeners are insecure about how the new civic user groups relate to their own green and material values – their legal property and the result of their work and care over the years – fearing in essence theft or destruction. In sum, when it comes to ownership arrangements, allotment gardeners in general want the solidarity to be limited to association members, not extended to a wider civic, which is causing tension between the desired ownership arrangement of allotment gardeners and the new desired ownership arrangements of the municipalities.

*On the ground* in Hamburg, more fine-grained tensions are observable. Here, the planned restructuring of the plots and protection of – according to national allotment garden law – illegitimate trees caused tensions between green gardeners and civic gardeners over whether the restructuring should follow a civic-representative democratic principle or a green-participatory principle. The civic gardeners – those who had lost their original plots due to the redevelopment and wanted to take on one of the new restructured plots, demanded the restructuring follow the municipalities' original plans: creating an efficient new structure without considering the existing flora and fauna in order to create as many new plots as possible ("civic restructuring"). The green middle-class activist gardeners meanwhile – most of whom could keep their original plots – demanded the restructuring follow what I conceptualise as "green restructuring", where the existing flora and fauna is protected, but which results in less plots. Both restructuring strategies are therefore based on different democratic planning principles, different spatial engagements, values and solidarities. The civic-restructuring shows solidarity with the quantitative majority of affected gardeners and the wider civic as future renters, the spatial engagement following quantitative civic-goals, resulting in a higher quantity of plots, but containing less green worth. The green restructuring meanwhile shows solidarity with the minority of politically active green gardeners as well as the flora and fauna located on the plot, the spatial engagement following green goals but containing less civic worth in a representative-democratic understanding of civic fairness. Since both ways of restructuring are based on different understandings of material fairness, they were fundamentally in conflict with each other, described by one interviewed planner like this: *"A complete new restructuring can happen much more*

*efficiently than if you restructure with the green structures in mind. That caused discussion amongst the allotment gardeners, because a few selected are being privileged, in the end that were maybe 20, 30, and on the other side this then results in less allotment garden plots for those who have lost their plot.”*

In the context of the restructuring, tensions also emerged regarding the many large trees (above 20 metres, and therefore illegal according to the German allotment garden law) standing on the site and how to integrate them with the new allotment garden zone, with green gardeners again demanding their integration and protection by referencing their green worth. Adding to this, a municipal regulation stipulates that areas which experienced bombing during the Second World War *must* be checked for undetonated weapons before any construction or restructuring can be done.<sup>16</sup> This caused tensions amongst green gardeners since the invasive procedure requires access to the soil and the removal of any green and material structures.

Ways were found to coordinate the green values and the green gardeners’ familiar spatial engagements with planners’ spatial engagements and legal responsibilities: a new survey report was commissioned, which allowed the situation to be discursively reframed so that a less destructive (and less thorough) technique could be applied without the municipality being liable for breaching the wider civics’ safety. Large trees were classified not as trees of private property, but as public trees of public importance – creating a different juridical situation – so they could remain standing despite the national allotment garden law prohibiting such trees. Finally, the municipality backed the green gardeners’ plot restructuring demands, with material coordinators such as landscape architects translating it into a new restructuring plan.

The coordination efforts are integrated into the land-use plan, thereby erasing traces of conflict and spatial oppressions. For in the land-use plan it is not visible which civic groups argued that the trees were of public importance – and which were not in favour of this; neither are the reasons mentioned why a new survey report was commissioned, nor are the familiar engagements behind the new structure plan visible. In other words: previous conflicts between different ways of engaging with spaces, different understandings of civic solidarities and democratic procedures have been made invisible. The activist gardeners’ familiar engagement with space has officially become a common good.

### ***Material interventions***

In all three cases, material interventions were part of the compromise. In Hamburg, the installation of new electricity and water infrastructure had been part of the redevelopment project all along. In Copenhagen, the municipality is requesting all allotment gardens allowing overnight stays – those that usually come with larger houses and electrical amenities – install new canalisation infrastructure as part of the city’s flood prevention strategy. In Basel, the municipality agreed to the Central Association’s demand for electrical infrastructure within allotment gardens.

These material interventions impact the ownership arrangements by raising the financial worth of allotment gardens, both related to the house price itself but also to rental costs,

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<sup>16</sup> The wording has since changed from “probing obligation” to “responsibility of the landowner” (see Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg 2014)

requiring higher financial resources from its renters. This is causing new tensions amongst the group of allotment gardeners on how to engage with the material structure of allotment gardens. Again, this connects to the question of solidarity: whose material needs and wishes – that translate to different financial values – should the municipality take into consideration? Which civic should be included into the ownership arrangement?

Tensions regarding material interventions and their impact on financial values are the most distinct in Copenhagen (see paper 5), where gardening huts can legally be up to 60m<sup>2</sup> in size (in future potentially up to 80m<sup>2</sup>), and its resourceful, increasingly middle-class renters are investing and upgrading the houses. In order to ensure the huts stay affordable for most people – a requirement to justify the special state protection – the municipality together with the Central Association regulates the prices by setting up strict appraisal rules for the huts (including price caps). Gardeners, however, disagree on how the material value should be translated into financial value: gardeners with manual background, who invested their own skilled labour into the huts, argue the prices are unfair since most of the new renters taking over new plots have the financial resources to pay higher prices and compensate the previous owner for their work and investment. They demand that in the context of a general middle-classification of allotment gardens, the municipality and Central Association show more financial solidarity with existing allotment gardeners and allow for a more adequate compensation of material values. Others, especially green gardeners in Copenhagen, disagree: they argue that the appraisal values are too high rather than too low, and demand solidarity with the low-income civic groups who are increasingly out-priced. Rather than material interventions, they argue, more green interventions like the ones described above are needed: plots should be restructured to allow for more users, only small huts should be allowed and the emphasis should be on gardening and growing vegetables.

### ***Institutional Interventions***

In Basel and Hamburg, the compromise is leading to changes in the cases' institutional structures (see paper 1 and 4), from a civic-representative towards a more green-participatory operation modus. The new municipal coordinator in Basel, for instance, expressed her desire to see younger, more green-minded people in the association boards. She also talked about the need for gardeners to become more active, responsible citizens, relying less on municipal support to solve internal association conflicts, for instance.

In the Hamburg case, this desired change is currently happening. The old civic-representative association disbanded with the redevelopment, and the activist gardeners have formed the new (unelected) association structure, understanding themselves decidedly in opposition to the former association board, where, as one of the activist gardeners criticised, “*everybody smoked in the old association board, and then they all drank beer, very cliché (...) this will hopefully become a young, a modern association, a politically-interested, an engaged board association.*”

New lines of inclusion and exclusion are connected to this new understanding; more participatory-oriented persons with green values, willing and wanting to be a stronger part of decision-making processes and who would have found the representative mode oppressive, are framed as new, desired members; whereas more representative-oriented persons, often with a working-class background, wanting more order and control both in terms of civic and green values (a more ordered garden and clear-cut rules, for instance), are framed as

undesirable and excluded. In Hamburg, these exclusions are practiced on the ground in various ways: the new association hut has a large anti-smoking sign on the door, communicating a changing association culture. The activist groups, now responsible for organisational management, are allocating plots amongst likeminded middle-class citizens, becoming new gatekeepers able to influence the sites' social composition.

All these are parts of a shifting ownership culture, where the new association is forming solidarities with likeminded, participatory-oriented, green middle-class citizens, and excluding others not part of this group in different ways.

These changes are not only the result of the new association board engaging in different ways with civic structures and allotment gardens, it is also made possible by the municipality and the Central Association closely working together with the new green association – after the activists shifted from their role as contesters towards collaborators (Silver et al. 2010), they, together, are in charge of creating new green-participatory solidarities, and are increasingly excluding civic-representative solidarities from the ownership arrangements.

### **5.3. Outlook: From *ownership arrangement* to *ownership feelings***

In the section 5.2. I have analysed and described the main lines of contestations and tensions running through the three cases, and how the compromises represent ownership re-arrangements of urban greenspace. I want to end chapter 5 with introducing a new category, “ownership feelings”, that I argue cuts across all cases and could provide a new lens to understand political action in the context of civic-public urban greenspaces.

Referring to Laurent Thévenot (2011, 2014), I base this category on an understanding of allotment gardens as green commonplaces in the plural, including institutionalised formal spatial engagements such as juridical rights and responsibilities as well as informal practices. Together, they influence how ownership is felt and experienced in different ways between various actors: public landowners in the studied cases felt ownership because they are categorised as legal landowners, required redevelopment land for grey sustainability projects and could draw upon objects and persons to integrate the spaces' values into the city. Gardeners felt ownership because they owned different green and material values, felt ease and intimacy with their plot, engaged in care and responsibility. Different civic groups were asked to feel ownership through the planners' and gardeners' contestation efforts: those looking for housing, who would benefit from the space being redeveloped, or those living nearby, who enjoy the green values as pedestrians.

Ownership feelings are *dynamic* and *relational*, with green materiality such as perennials linking as well as transcending categories of “public” and “private” ownership; the continuously growing green values belonging to the gardeners require, and are rooted in, the rented land and soil belonging to the municipal landowners, thereby hinging civic and public ownership feelings with each other. Gardeners, by investing care and “conspicuous labour” (Haskaj 2020), contribute to the growth of green values that are of worth in the sustainable city. The cases illustrate how the ambiguous, dynamic and relative nature of green values was translated to common goods and held power. The question of which caring regime is

employed on public-owned greenspaces and who cares for what kind of green materiality is therefore a political question insofar as it addresses and relates a wider civic with each other. The *potential* power of experienced attachment explains why public landowners, for instance, frequently disallow new community gardeners to plant perennials and erect built structures on temporary urban gardens. I argue it is not only related to the fact that these structures must be taken down again if the land is redeveloped, which translates to financial costs, but also because ownership feelings might grow beyond the formal arrangements and spur political action. The question of green materiality and civic care is therefore of fundamental importance when it comes to civic-public urban greenspaces: green and material structures make past care and ownership feelings visible, they create new values that can translate the worth of personal attachments into common arguments and communicate alternative planning options to the public.

By suggesting to think of ownership arrangements as ownership feelings, I hope to draw attention to the multiple, contradictory possibilities and experiences ownership between civic groups and public stakeholders can contain (Blomley 2004), and how urban greenspaces are becoming battlegrounds between different forms of civic and green solidarity, as I described in the past sections. In the context of urban greenspaces, the question of solidarity involves asking: which civic's ownership feelings should be translated into material action and how may this impact others?

Thinking of ownership as experienced and structured in feelings could also draw attention to spatial commonality and urban greenspaces as something that is not only constructed and composed through discourses and practices, but also through the frequently overlooked aspects of emotions and affect, and how these are translated into different material practices. In this context, I argue more research is needed that looks into how different civic and public ownership feelings and experiences related to urban greenspaces can be coordinated and connected to each other. Understanding spatial engagements as ownership feelings and its translations into material practices can help explore ecological and urban activism in new, more nuanced ways, as well as suggesting necessary new ways of thinking about urban planning: as something not only impacting material and social structures, but also invisible civic affect structures.

## 6. Conclusions

This Ph.D. project has studied how allotment gardens as long-standing civic-public ownership arrangements between municipalities, allotment gardeners and associations are currently in the process of being re-negotiated in the context of sustainability politics and which civic inclusions and civic exclusions in the form of new greenspace solidarities are thereby drawn. The research was based on three empirical cases in Basel, Hamburg and Copenhagen, where the planned redevelopment of allotment gardens as part of sustainable new city projects led to conflicts, but also, eventually, to a compromising agreement between various civic and green actors. Exploring both conflict and compromise, disagreement and agreement, I drew upon a pragmatic sociology of urbanism perspective which provided this thesis with theoretical tools to explore contradictions related to sustainable city politics by combining a focus on orders of worth and spatial engagement regimes.

Furthermore, I situated the thesis within a large body of research exploring the rising number of new civic greenspaces and new forms of civic participation in the city, and the challenges and valuation tensions emerging within and through these developments. Though allotment gardens tend to be viewed as separate from new greening initiatives, I argue their case provides important insights of relevance for urban greenspace governance in general, which I want to present in this last chapter.

Allotment gardens, my empirical cases show, sit at various intersections: between green, civic and market values and visions of sustainability. From a municipal perspective, the spaces can be valued for their multiple worth associated with allotment gardens; they can, however, also be valued for the common worth associated with new developments such as new housing.

Allotment gardens also sit at the intersection between public and private space: while the land is publicly owned, only the gardeners and associations transform the spaces' green and grey materiality. Thus, allotment gardens contain an inherent ambiguity and tensions as to the "civic" status of the sites that in the past has resulted in spaces' displacement and redevelopment. To come to terms with this ambiguity, I suggest a new category to think of allotment gardens in terms of dynamic "ownership feelings" that are based on formal and informal arrangements settings. They can be felt and experienced in different ways, with material and green structures both an expression as well as the result of ownership feelings. With this new lens, the often overlooked relationship between emotional values expressing themselves in care and responsibility and the resulting green values is given more attention. It suggests that public landowners need to consider ownership feelings during civic-public greenspace collaboration, and how the relationship between the desired green worth and the emotional worth can be coordinated in new ways.

Understanding allotment garden contestations as rooted in the intimate, place-based ownership feelings of gardeners could therefore perhaps help navigate urban-greenspace conflicts emerging between civic and public actors in the future.

My research also provides insights that help to contextualise civic-public greenspace conflicts, and why they emerge in the first place. Approaching the spaces from the perspective of valuations, like my research did, is fruitful in this undertaking. For, at the core of the

conflict is disagreement between public and civic actors regarding the spaces' worth: allotment gardeners emphasised the green and/or civic worth associated with the allotment use; planners meanwhile saw the land as an opportunity to realise projects envisioned as part of new sustainability planning. Different civic, green and financial visions of sustainability are in conflict with each other, and this is reflected within the case of allotment gardens.

In order to avoid the spatial oppression stemming from the planners' vision of sustainability, the empirical analysis traced how allotment gardeners translated their spatial engagements into a language of commonality, conceptualising two strategies: Firstly, civic translation, whereby solidarities amongst mostly working-class gardeners are activated and the testing takes place in traditional political arenas. And secondly, green translation, whereby solidarities amongst new middle classes with green values, beyond the traditional association structures, are activated, the testing shifting between juridical and new planning-participation arenas. Both strategies differ in their democratic understanding, classed solidarities and emphasised orders of worth, yet each relies on allotment gardens' grown civic and/or green worth that can be translated into a commonplace and a wider civic linked to its worths.

As such, allotment gardens, by assembling people and spatial care over many years, become a breeding ground for various resources needed for civic-political action and planning contestations, with different solidarities and political-action resources co-existing. The cases show how they differ: between traditional institutionalised civic structures relying on quantitative numbers and civic solidarity, and new green structures relying on scientific knowledge and green solidarity.

By retracing and analysing these civic efforts and the municipal responses to them, the thesis showed how the issue of conflicting evaluation was resolved in the studied cases and how differences in civic and public actors's regimes of engagements were bridged.

Applying a third analytical lens focusing on civic exclusions, I then explored which material and civic consequences the civic-public agreement contained. I showed how the compromise involved both an integration and protection of allotment gardens in all cities, as well as their exclusion and civic-material transformation. In all cities, the municipal landowners are employing new green interventions, such as creating public paths and upgrading infrastructures, that impact the spaces' worth and subsequently civic users: the interventions are reducing the civic groups who can access the spaces' as renters (since more financial resources are needed due to the upgrading), while expanding the groups who can access the spaces in other ways as pedestrians, for instance, from which mostly the middle-class nearby residents benefit. The interventions taken together thus discourage the presence of resource-low citizens, while encouraging the presence of new, resource-stronger citizens. These material interventions are justified through claimed green sustainability, yet they impact other values. Whether it is a planned and calculated effect to change the social composition and exclude the poor from the now protected and valuable allotment gardens, or whether it is unintended – it demonstrates the urgent need to be better aware of and coordinate amongst different visions of sustainability, related to allotment gardens as well as urban greenspaces in general.

My study furthermore showed how the compromise is leading to new tensions amongst various actors who relate to the spaces and their worth in different ways: the working class'

displaced gardeners point out the injustice of the preferential treatment and protection of selected spaces attached to middle-class gardeners with green values; municipalities and a wider civic question whether the protection of the spaces is justified in cities with growing housing shortage; and amongst gardeners themselves there is disagreement regarding the green restructuring interventions.

According to Holden et al. (2015), urban greenspace redevelopments make for interesting sites to inquire which values cities should fulfil. Based on my own research, I argue that urban greenspace redevelopments also make for interesting sites to inquire how values intersect and how to regulate between different orders of worth. The case of allotment gardens shows the impact of material interventions and how public and civic actors' ways of engaging with green and material structures impact other orders of worth. Ensuring civic worth and inclusivity in the long run, I argue, requires us to pay closer attention to materiality and how people relate and engage with it, how it impacts other worths, including invisible emotional values. The category of "ownership feelings" could perhaps provide a new lens to explore material affect and how material attachment towards urban greenspace spurs political action. This, perhaps, can point us in new directions of how different needs related to urban greenspaces and solidarities can be coordinated in such a way as to ensure the civic lines of inclusion are drawn much more widely than they currently are.

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