



LUNDS
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Malmö and places of modernity

- Shopping malls and visions of Utopia

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Abstract

In this essay the concept of modernity is explored in relation to the city of Malmö. Modernity is defined and investigated. Then it is put in relationship with the new comprehensive plan from the urban planning office in Malmö and three of the bigger shopping malls in Malmö.

Key words

Modernity, urban development, Gemeinschaft, Gesellschaft, enlightenment, progress, social production of space, Malmö, city, society, community

Aims and questions

My main aim with this essay is to explore the concept of modernity and what defines the modern cities of today. One very important aspect of my approach to this essay is that I have used the original works of some of the classic authors in the field, rather than using contemporary interpretations. The reason for this is that I want get back to the foundations of the grand concepts and theories, and in that way understand and learn from the original ideas. Therefor this essay should be viewed as much as an exploration of the classic theories of modernity, as an exploration of places of modernity in the modern city. It is for this reason that a large part of this essay consists of a theoretical framework from which I seek to draw conclusions from what I've learned and experience regarding the shopping malls of Malmö.

My first particular aim is to explore and lay bare some central thoughts and concepts theoretically defining "modernity", and to put these findings in a geographical setting by relating them to the concepts of "space" and "place".

My second aim is to try to answer the following (empirical) questions:

- How does the comprehensive plan 2012 relate to modernity?
- How do the shopping malls of Malmö relate to the vision of future Malmö?

Introduction

The packed train stops at Hyllie station and the doors open. When the train starts to move again on its way to Copenhagen there is hardly anyone left. I'm swept away with the crowd as I approach the escalators that lead up to the sunshine and main square above us. As I exit the station building the crowd around me scatters and in front of me, almost like a giant cocoon, lays the brand new shopping mall of Emporia. I marvel at the grand design of "the prime shopping mall of Scandinavia" and just as I was just swept out of the train, I now find myself swept in through the entrance together with the crowd.

As I leave the grey and dull Swedish weather behind me I step through the looking glass and enter wonderland. Around me a spectacular world of commodities unfolds and I soon forget that I am in Malmö and even Sweden. Emporia seems like a place nowhere and everywhere at the same time; an airport without the airplanes. I feel just like the flâneur from a Baudelaire novel, strolling around and taking my time. After all, I'm not here for the shopping, but to look at the grand spectacle of Emporia itself and all the people within and without. Yet, after a while of strolling about I do not feel as confident as a Baudelarian

character. Rather, I start to feel like Kafka's "K" when looking at a world around me that I'm a part of, but do not understand. The more I behold the more alienated I feel. It is not that I don't find my surroundings tenderizing, but the sheer mass and intensity of the place soon becomes too taxing to comprehend and make sense of.

I wanted to be able to find a way to understand what I felt, what I saw and what transpired around me. More importantly, I wanted to go beyond the capitalist surface and dig deeper into a more fundamental concept of the society in which a place such as Emporia existed. Even though Emporia is contemporary, I felt that it might be a part of a greater picture, spanning beyond the present into the past, but in a peculiar way also seemed to be a part of the future.

During the summer of 2011 I was employed at the urban planning office in Malmö. My work there consisted of conducting a citizen consultation and dialogue concerning the new comprehensive plan that is to be issued this year. The consultation process is a period during which the citizens of Malmö may comment on the content of the comprehensive plan, after which these comments by law need to be considered before continuing with the work. My job was to gather these comments and spread awareness of this opportunity. We used a number of methods for this, but perhaps the most untraditional was that we during a two-month period maintained presence in the city streets and asked people there what they thought of Malmö and the future Malmö. The most overrepresented topic that people brought up was the issue of the shopping malls; "Why are there so many?" and, more importantly, "how does the shopping malls of Malmö relate to the vision of the future Malmö?". I found this result to be very interesting and it is this that inspired me to write this essay. My ambition is to explore the greater picture of the shopping mall in relation to the modern city and the vision of tomorrow. As I wrote, my aim is to use original works of authors that concerned themselves with modernity, vision and the urban environment in an effort to familiarize myself with the foundations of the concepts in their original form and how the ideas were first laid out. I find much is often said about modernity, but few concern themselves with digging in the roots and really explain the concepts and its implications. Of course, I am aware that the concept of modernity is vastly huge and in some aspects not suitable for using as a theoretical starting point. However, I am convinced that it is possible to say at least something about it when relating it to a certain place and a certain issue. Therefore, I shall investigate three of the shopping malls of Malmö; Emporia, Triangeln and Entré. And I will also relate the comprehensive plan to the same concept and to the shopping malls themselves.

The first part of the essay consists of a theoretical framework that investigates what modernity is and means today and from a historical perspective. The concept of space, and the production of space, is also discussed. This section of the essay is then concluded by a brief, yet important, reflection and discussion about power and methods of conduct. What I also want to stress here is that this essay is in fact an exploration of the fundamental literature, as well as a research of places of modernity.

The next part of the essay is practical and consists of a review of empirical material that seeks to investigate the concept of modernity, both in thought and in space. This is done by a discursive textual and visual analysis of the new comprehensive plan of Malmö. Furthermore, five greater contemporary shopping malls of Malmö will be investigated and studied as typifying objects for contemporary modernist thinking in a modern city.

Cities of modernity

Let's start this section from the very beginning with a question. What defines the modern cities of today? Perhaps its essence is that we cannot have a clear understanding. We can comprehend that there are processes that we don't understand. The city is like a theatre and as citizens we are beholders of a modern drama that is yet just superficial. We can only see the surface of vast amount of hidden processes and activities that lies underneath. We as humans simply cannot comprehend everything that goes on around us and indeed if we could we would probably drown in the information overflow. It is often said that we live in an "information age" and that never before has such a huge amounts of data and information been available to us. Yet, the human capacity for handling information has not altered. In this essay I shall investigate what defines the modern city and relate that to the city of Malmö.

Perhaps the best way to start is to define what is meant by *modern* and what is meant by *city*. The modern relates to the concept of modernity. The modern age is said to have begun around the Renaissance, but really took hold of western society in what is today deemed as "the age of enlightenment". Some claim that we today have arrived to a state of *post-modernity*, in which the processes and the mind-set of the last three to five hundred years has altered. This is a discussion that I will come back to further on, but nevertheless both modernity and post-modernity relates to this. Modernity in its essence could be said to be the thought of human progress; both scientific and moral. Sven-Erik Liedman, whose thoughts and analysis I use in this essay to understand the concept of modernity, make a distinction between hard enlightenment, which is the material and scientific progress, and soft enlightenment, which is the moral and social progress. I will explore the concept of modernity more in depth later on in this essay, but just for introductory reasons the essence of modernity could be said to be the through of human ever-on going progress to the better (Liedman 1997, p. 18 – 19).

If we then shift our focus to the concept of the *city* we could make it easy by defining it as a spacial area where a certain amount of people live. This is of course how most countries today chose to define a city for administrative and juridical purposes. This definition of a city says very little, if nothing at all, about what is really going on inside a city, what it looks like, who the people are and how they interact with one another. What it does tell us, however, is something about what is not a *city*.

The German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies concerned himself with this distinction. Instead of counting people in a certain area, he tried to do this by defining different human power relations. He made a distinction between what he called *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. *Gemeinschaft* is the typical rural society, which is defined by a small amount of people that all know each other so that the power relations and the balance of society are upheld by close social ties and by trust, rather than laws. Tönnies meant that in this kind of *community* (which perhaps is the closest to a translation of *Gemeinschaft* in English we will get) there was no need for laws, since the natural social bonds between the people of the *Gemeinschaft* was enough. *Gesellschaft* on the other hand Tönnies saw as typical for the modern urban areas. In the city the *Gemeinschaft* cannot be maintained, simply because there are too many strangers. We therefore had to invent laws based on rational thinking to maintain the power structure and create a functional *society* (*Gesellschaft*) (Tönnies 1887, p. 15 - 21).

If modernity, or the *modern*, could be said to be the thought and practice of human progress and the *city* could be defined as a place where human power relations are

maintained by rational law, then the *modern city* could be defined as the place in which the activities of human progress cluster together, dictated by the rational rule of law. Therefore the modern city cannot be said to be static, but rather an ever on-going process in which it is produced and re-produced. Henri Lefabvre made a distinction between the *material space* of the urban reality, the *representational space* of maps and plans, and *representations of space* in visions and ideas. He argued that the social spaces of modern cities are being produced between its people.

Malmö

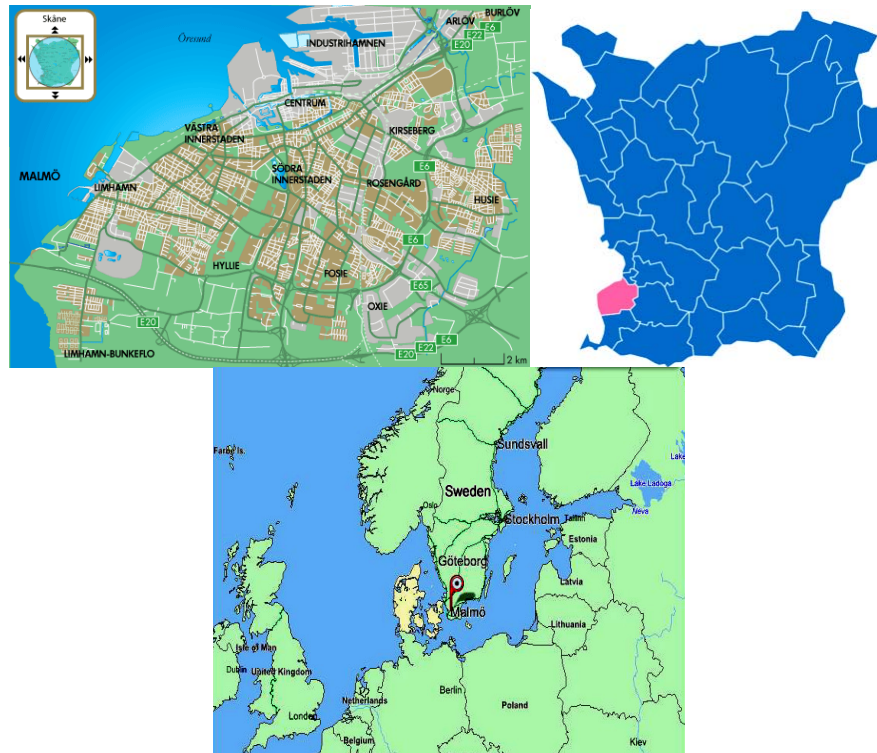
My object of study in this essay will be the city of Malmö. There are several reasons why I find Malmö interesting as a subject of study. First of all, and on a personal level, it is the city in which I have lived for the last five years, during which I have become very fond of it. During this period I have had the great fortune to work at the city planning office, which has given me a more comprehensive understanding of Malmö's past, where the city stands today and where it is headed. I will use a lot of my experiences from the planning office in this essay. Secondly, the city has undergone huge changes during the last 50 years. From being one of the wealthiest cities in Sweden during the 60ties and 70ties, with a big and successful industry, to the crises of the 80ties and 90ties when the industry fled to Asia, and now to a city revived by a new university, great focus on innovation, big infrastructural investments tying Malmö closer to Copenhagen and the rest of Europe (Möllerström 2011, p. 70 - 73).

It could be argued that what has characterized Malmö the last 30 years is a shift from government to governance. This is shift that has not only characterized Malmö, but also most of the western world and in different fields of society; politics, urban planning and the economy. Government meant that the government was one of the players of the game, while governance is means that government governs the rules of the game in which there are mostly private players. It is also characterized by private public enterprises, where public actors have a close relationship with the private sphere. It could also be argued that there has been a shift from (Möllerström 2011, p. 69 - 70).

In the case of urban planning in Malmö, this has meant that the large scale planning has shifted from solid plans of how the different areas of the city should look like in the future; to a more liquid approach where there the vision of the future (Möllerström 2011, p. 76 - 77).

Neo-liberalising Malmö

In recent years there have been extensive writings about the branding of Malmö. Both personally and academically I find the most interesting one to be Veselinka Möllerströms thesis named “The transformation of Malmö”. She argues that Malmö has gone through a transformation since the 60ties from being a working class town to a “city of knowledge” (Möllerström 2011, p. 152 - 160).



The city of Malmö, Malmö in the region of Skåne and Malmö in the greater northern European region

Limitations

When studying such a vast concept like modernism, I feel it is very important to make limitations to what one is about to research. I have chosen to focus this essay on what I think is the essential part of modernism; the vision of tomorrow. Furthermore, there will be discussions that I will only brush the surface on, either because they are slightly of topic or that there simply is not enough room in the essay for deeper investigation.

What would have been preferable is to have made a deeper exploration of what is not modernism and anti-modernism. This could provide contrast and be helpful to understand the complex and elusive concept modernism. However, it would have taken up far too much space to be dealt with in this essay and though helpful, it is not essential to what this essay concerns itself with.

Part 1: Theoretical exploration of modernity

Modernity

“Everything in life is somewhere else, and you get there in your car.”

- Elwyn Brooks White

Modernity is a vast concept, which includes every historical era since the Renaissance. To describe modernity in its entirety is therefore to be a big task for this essay. What I will be interested in, however, is trying to find its essential connection to the modern city and, more precisely, the city of Malmö. I will nonetheless begin my exploration of the concept in its beginnings; the enlightenment (Liedman 1997, p. 18 – 19).

The Renaissance, literally meaning “the revival”, was the period under which the ideas of ancient Greece and the Hellenic culture were revived in new context. The age of enlightenment could in many ways be considered to be the maturing of the modern age. During this period it could be argued that the ideas in general took a step forward and became more than just a revival of the ancient ideas of the Greek. It was also the revival of the role of women and their place in society. Even though the middle ages could not be considered to have been a period of great equality between the sexes, the role of women in society and in the home was not as strictly described as during the Renaissance. Ideas of women as passive, cold and unwholesome, and men as active, warm and perfected were also revived, which indicates a change in moral values, and the expression of these, as well (Liedman 1997, p. 263 - 268), (Lennerhed 2006).

The enlightenment marked a more agnostic, and even atheist, standpoint towards God and a more sceptical view of the ever-less powerful church powers. One very important aspect of both the enlightenment and the Renaissance was the shift from the kingdom of God to the “utopia project” on earth. This is perhaps one of the most important legacies from the ancient Greece; the normative ideas of how society should be. As you might already know the Greek word for Utopia has a dual meaning. It is both a *good place* and *no place*, implying that such a place is too good to exist. None the less, it is a place worth striving to achieve. Hence, we have the birth of the thought of a better tomorrow, which could be said to be one of the cornerstones of modernist thinking; the thought of progress. The Utopian ideas of the modern age could be said to have begun with Thomas Hobbes and the book *Leviathan* and can be traced forward to Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, and forward to Adam Smith and Karl Marx. Thus, modernist thought could be said to be the cradle of political thought as well. We could put almost all big political ideas and ideologies in the modernist box, because almost all share a common value of future progress and development of some kind. The exception would be the naturalists, anarchists and anti-modernists. The common value of political ideology is there for modernism, which spans the entire left and right spectrum (Liedman 1997, p. 415 – 420, 462 – 468).

Two of the greatest sociologists of our time, Jürgen Habermas and Jean-Francois Lyotard, have debated a great deal on whether or not the enlightenment and modernity still can be considered as a temporary force in our society. Habermas, coming from the Weberian

tradition, meant that what characterized modernity was the separation esthetical, the ethical and the theoretical. Despite the many flaws of the progress of the modern age, modernity still has a lingering power that persists in today's society. Lyotard, on the other hand, claims that we have arrived to what he calls a "state of post-modernity". He argued that it no longer is possible to make sense of the events in contemporary society as where possible in the last hundreds of years. There is no clear progress, as such that the events build on each other to form something new. Instead, the events are shattered to separate pieces in an insensible array. For example, Lyotard pointed out that ideology is in fact dead in the sense that the "great ideas" is obsolete. Few people today, both politicians and people in academic circles, would use or try to come up with ideas that encompasses everything in the same sense as it used to. The exception would be that of the neo-liberal doctrine, which has become hegemonic in explaining problems and solutions of contemporary issues. It does not, just as any other ideology, view itself as an ideology (Liedman 1997, p. 18 – 22).

As I wrote in the introduction, Sven-Erik Liedman has written extensively on the matter of the history of modernity. He categorizes enlightenment in two categories; the hard and the soft. The hard enlightenment, which is the type of enlightenment that has persisted, seemingly unhindered through the modern age, consists of the natural sciences. The soft enlightenment consists of moral thought, feelings and the social sciences.

Even though I think Lyotard has very valid points in why we should have reached a stage of post-modernity, I am inclined to agree more with the Habermasian tradition that modernity still has serious implications on our world today. Indeed, as we shall see in the essay, this is the case of the modern city. In fact, one might even argue that the argument of post-modernism is one of the most modernist thoughts there is.

Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft

"Gesellschaft means life in the public sphere, in the outside world. In Gemeinschaft we are united from the moment of our birth with our own folk for better or worse. We go out into Gesellschaft as if into a foreign land. A young man is warned about mixing with bad society: but 'bad community' makes no sense in our language."

- Ferdinand Tönnies

I shall begin this part by explaining the reasons for why the German words of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* is used, instead of the closest English translation of the words; *community* and *society*. Just as with community, *Gemeinschaft* is something you could be a part of and not a part of, but in the Germanic sense of the word it is also a *feeling* of *Gemeinschaft*. For instance, it is common in Germanic languages to refer to your circle of friends as your *Gemeinschaft*, or to *feel* a *Gemeinschaft* between people with similar interests as you. In Swedish for example, having something in common is to have something *Gemensamt*, from the word *Gemenskap*. It could of course be argued that the word *common* and *community* is likewise related, but there still exists linguistic differences. It could be said that *Gemeinschaft* is a mix of the word *community* and the word *friendship* (*ship*, in this case, would be the English equivalent of *schaft*) (Tönnies 1887, p. 18 -20, 33).

As for the word *Gesellschaft*, it is only farfetched related to the English word *society*. Society in the sense of *Gesellschaft* could rather be referred to the organic society, for

example an ant colony, where cooperation makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. *Gesellschaft* and *Gesell*, is closely related to the German words of *taking on a task* and of the word *cooperation* (Encyclopaedia Britannica "*Gesellschaft*").

Gemeinschaft is community based upon emotions, feelings and tradition, which Tönnies thought typical for the rural peasant life. There is no law or sovereign as such, for there are no laws. The community is upheld by the social interaction between the members of the *Gemeinschaft*, in which everyone knows each other. Trust among its members is enough to hold the community together. Tönnies see the *Gemeinschaft* as the rule of natural will, but not quite in the same way as Hobbes saw the state of nature.

In contrast, *Gesellschaft* is the community of rational rule, which in turn is typical for the great modern cities. Tönnies argued that this community of *Gemeinschaft* had to make way for the rational *Gesellschaft*, where human interaction was more impersonal and law replace trust as an institution for stability. In the great urban areas there was no room for *Gemeinschaft*, simply because you would be surrounded by too many strangers (Tönnies 1887, p. 171 – 173).

Both of these archetypal types of society are forms or products of collective will, and therefore can viewed as the product of power, but they stand in contrast to one another. There is a struggle between the rational and the traditional, the micro of the *Gemeinschaft* and the macro of the *Gesellschaft*, both of which are present in the cities of modernity.

Gemeinschaft and natural will

Tönnies sees the *Gemeinschaft* as the place and rule of natural will. One could also venture as far and claim that he by natural will actually implies some kind of *state of nature*. Tomas Hobbes wrote in the *Leviathan* that life in the state of nature is "nasty, brutish and short" and even though not putting it in quite the same brutal way Rousseau and John Lock also wrote extensively on the matter. They all argued, though in different fashion, that life was unbearable in such a state of nature.

Tönnies, however, did not see the *Gemeinschaft* in the same way. Even though he, just as Hobbes and his descendants saw the rule of nature as one without any kind of sovereign, Tönnies believed that such a power structure within a smaller group of individuals would work very well up until a certain point. Of course it is not simply a chase of comparing the state of nature with the *Gemeinschaft*, for of course Tönnies (Tönnies 1887, p. 75 - 76).

Just as many other German sociologist of his time, Tönnies has been accused of having to a romanticized view of the natural and the rural which did not correspond to reality. However, that was not the case. Tönnies has always put the *Gemeinschaft* and rural in perspective with the modern society. He stated that these kinds of glorified communities that existed in the past (and the ones that tended to be overused by then contemporary romantics such as Otto Gierke and Sir Henry Main) was "of the past" and should be view as such as that. Tönnies analysis of the *Gemeinschaft* does not become interesting because it helps explain power conduct in past rural communities, but rather in its implications as a bipolar concept of the modern society and, indeed, the modern city (Tönnies 1887, p. 171 – 173).

Gesellschaft, rational will and modernity

“Half of the time we´re gone, but we don´t know where”

- Simon & Garfunkel

Tönnies sees the Gesellschaft as the disassociation between ends and means. Just as Habermas, Tönnis had his own ideas about modernity and this notion of separation between feelings from action he saw as crucial for understanding it´s essence. In the Gesellschaft what we do and what we want to do no longer connects with each other. In a capitalist context, the rule of rational will in the Gesellschaft meant, according to Tönnies, *the pursue of wealth and domination*. These are the ends that all our actions strive for, but at the same time it is not the action itself that make this happen. He identified an inherent contradiction of rationality; it always strove for greater and greater ends. In utilitarian sense he meant that members of the Gesellschaft, the modern man, always strove for greater utility; happiness. Yet, our actions and the way that life is lived within the Gesellschaft do not correspond to the ends we hope for, but rather just the means. We can relate this to what I wrote earlier about the Utopia project; it is both a place of perfect harmony and happiness, but also a place that does not exist. In the same way we can look at the strive for happiness of individuals within the Gesellschaft. Actions, even though intended to serve the greatest of ends, end up becoming new means to fulfil the ever-distant new ends (Tönnies 1887, p. 45, 103 - 110).

Both Tönnis and the German sociologist George Simmel argued that Gesellschaft was the very essence of modernity; a community of strangers pulled together by law and rationalism. Modernity is created in the Gesellschaft. Simmel writes of how the french flâneur loses himself in the vision of the city. The flâneur is more of a concept of a certain kind of individual, then a real person. Simmel argued that the basis of all sociology is human interaction with her surroundings. In the interaction the human subject becomes, but the object interacted with is also transformed. It was probably Baudelaire that for the first time presented the flâneur in one of his novels and Simmel saw fictional person as being typical for the modernist age. Baudelaire lived and worked in a time when the first arcades of Paris were built. The arcades could be said to be the western world´s first version the shopping mall and is closely related to the oriental Bazar-concept of a market place indoors. The flâneur is not consuming goods, but is rather consuming the city itself. *He* (for in Baudelaire´s time it was always a he) is not shopping and hurrying along, but finds himself above all that. He is making himself the spectator of all the commotion, for he can afford to walk slowly. In the modern city, time itself becomes a commodity. The present, ever so close to the future, but never quite there; always hurrying along. Later in this essay we shall also find out that the flâneur and Simmels *interactionism* is closely related to the concept of relational space and power (Tönnies 1887, p. 40).

Space and place

“The Wise man looks out into space and he knows there are no limited dimensions.”

- Lao Tzu

“Space or place?” is a question that I think every geographer asks him or herself at least once. I have thought a great deal about how to approach the issue and after much consideration I think it is an issue about finding and explaining the meaning yourself. It would really be trivial question if it were just a question of choosing one above the other, but since I will use both in this essay I think it highly relevant to explore both of the concepts further before applying them. This will, therefore, be a more speculative part of this essay.

I, again, want to set the concepts in perspective by looking at their different meanings in different languages to widen the view. In English the word space is often used to describe the area in between things; the void. For instance, on a computer keyboard there is a button to make space between words. It is also used as kind of a synonym to the universe or to describe what all the stars and planets exists in.

In my native language, which is Swedish, the meaning of space is almost the same as in English, but there are interesting differences. Space in Swedish is called *rymd*. It is related to the old Swedish word for room; *rum*. The big difference between the meaning in Swedish and English is that space in Swedish is not referring to the void between things, but rather the things between the void. For instance we might again take the keyboard spacebar as an example. The Swedish word for space in this chase is *mellan rum*; *between rooms*. If we translate it directly back to English we end up with the meaning *between space*. This starts a chicken-and-egg loop, where space is actually constantly referring to itself. We might now see why space is used as a word to describe the endlessly big universe, but looking at it in this linguistic way we might also understand that the universe at the same time is endlessly small.

The big question then becomes; where does *place* fit into space? In China, the ancient board game called “Go” is said to be a micro version of the universe or space. The board consists of a flat surface with a grid pattern. Two opponents are playing against each other. One is using black bricks, the other, white ones. There is no need to go further into the game details to make my point. When empty, the board (or space) seems simplistic and logical, but when the bricks come into play, patterns start to emerge and the game (or space) becomes very complex. Yet, it is in this sense that the game must be played and that goes for space as well. Space cannot be understood when it is empty, because emptiness itself *is* space. There must be something within and around it to define it. There must be *things*. But this is not a static notion; there are not simply *things* in space. Things take *place* in space and therefor space is defined by things through time; place is movement within space. One could say that space is therefore relational; it depends on the things, or places within it. Indeed, space is nothing but a reference to the things and places it contains (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/236403/go>).

Even though this is a very metaphysical train of thought that perhaps does not seem to belong in a paper like this I find that it indeed gives a hint how the difference and the usage of space and place. When referring to a certain area I will be writing about space, since space is defined by the places within it. A space consists of a number of things and places and can therefore be used in the broader term. In the next section of the essay I will investigate the production of spaces, after which I hope the meaning of space and it’s use becomes even clearer to the reader

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/377923/metaphysics/15821/Space-and-time>).

The production of space

**“What is the city but the people?”
- William Shakespeare**

Representational space is the spaces of imagination. It is the space that we perceive. As I wrote in the introduction we cannot simply comprehend all the processes that coexist in the city; we can only behold a small part of it. That is not the whole truth either, because we are all subjective in relation to what we perceive and therefore our own experience of space is not simply the part of the material space that we can see, but rather a combination of reality and, if you will, fantasy. Our own individual perception of the city is based on our memories of past perceptions and our expectations of what is to come. In our minds we give the city a past and a future; we give it life. When we look out of our window we do not only see a jungle of concrete, steel, glass and cars; we make sense of it in a different way and give it functions. We see people moving about, houses in which we can imagine people to live, we remember how the streets used to look like during the summers when people didn't have jackets on and we expect it to be like that next summer as well (Lefebvre 1991, p. 39).

But it is not only how we as beholders of the city and city life perceive it; we ourselves as beholders of the city are a part of it. By perceiving space we also become a part of it our self and thus a part of the product that forms the space. We are bound to have emotions attached to the places in which we roam. We feel at home, we feel alienated, we feel lost and we feel apart. Lefebvre meant that since space is being produced this way, the city itself becomes a commodity which we as humans have a right to. It is not the individual right, but rather a collective right since the city is a collective product (Lefebvre 1991, p. 363 - 365).

Representations of space consist of material things that represent space. The most common thing to think of as a representation of space is of course a map. A map represents a part of the metrical space, but is not equal to the space itself. However, a representation of space could be anything that acts to represent something else; a painting, a commercial or text (Lefebvre 1991, p. 38).

Material space is quite clearly the physical space, which we can see and walk through. I would once again want to stress the time factor in this. The material space *exists* and therefore is a part of the present (Lefebvre 1991, p. 38).

Space is then produced as a combination of these three components. These are all part of space and it is hard to say where one ends and the other begins. To try to exemplify the production of space very basically we might look at a commercial poster hanging somewhere in a city. On the poster there is a person wearing certain clothes. Now, the poster is of course a part of the *material* space, because it is a physical product. We can feel, see and touch the poster if we like to. It is, quite simply an object. However, it is not all there is to it. The poster is a *representation* of a person with certain clothes, but it is not *a* person. We make sense of the colours we see and realize it is photograph of a person in certain clothes.

But when we look at the poster we do not only see the different colours printed on a paper and not just a poster *representing* a person; we also relate what we see to ourselves, whether we like it or not. Hence, we might have an opinion of how the person looks and

what the clothes look like. We might even imagine ourselves wearing those clothes, we might avoid the thought because we don't like the clothes at all or perhaps we dislike the whole idea of commercial posters and frown. Whatever we might think of it, the poster becomes something more than the physical and even more than what it might be intended to represent; it becomes a representational space of *us*, since we are needed to make sense of the poster. Indeed, without us the poster would be nothing but colour and paper.

Even though the example of the poster might seem a little trivial, we could apply the same train of thought to any material object. A city might be seen just in the same way as the poster; it consists of many different parts, but we as citizens make sense of it as a whole. We *produce* the city.

Lefebvre argued that since this is true, then we all as citizens of a city produce the city together and therefore we have a *right* to shape it. We have a right to shape it because we are both the product and the producers of it. It would be absurd if we were not also the owners. He thought this was "probably one of the most important, yet the most ignored, of all human rights". Remember what I wrote before about space being defined by the relations between *the things* or the places, and that these things define itself by motion? Lefebvre believed that there were contradictions in space just because this fact that space is not an absolute thing; it is in constant flux. The motion is produced, because things and places (the different spaces) does not move the same way. Rather, spaces are defined by opposing forces moving in different directions. This force, in a social sense, is power. In the next section we shall see that power is in fact *the relation* of the things (Lefebvre 1991, p. 401 - 405).

Power, space and method

"Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategically situation in a particular society."

- Michel Foucault

Just as we can attempt to read power in a text, we can also attempt to read power in other objects. Power, according to Foucault, is present everywhere, but is not a static thing. Power exists between things so that one person's power is defined by the other person. Lots of attempts have been made to try to explain power as simple as possible; narrowing it down to a sentence. Even though it could be argued that trying to define a vast and complex concept in just one sentence is profound, I personally find it to be a very helpful starting point, if nothing else. The best way then, I think, is to start off minimalistically. Robert A. Dahl does this neatly by stating that "*power is making a person do something which that person otherwise would not have done*". Even though I don't feel that it quite covers all of it, it is a good way to express the concept of power in a relational way. According to Foucault, power is a relation and not a commodity. This means that power is constantly in motion and that it is something that is being produced (and consumed) all the time (Dahl 2007, p. 417).

Reading power then becomes the art of scrutinizing these relationships in one way or the other. One way of doing this is by using discursive analysis. Just as Foucault claims power exists between things, he also claims that power in written material exists between the lines.

Power lies, therefore, not only in the intent of the author, but also the perception of the reader (Knox AO. 2006, p. 47 – 50).

We can also use this line of thought to describe the relationship between, and as we shall see, a shopping mall and its visitor. There is an intended function with a building and sometimes there is perhaps more than one intended function. There is also a perception of a place, which lies in the eyes and feelings of the beholder. Remember here what Lefebvre means by the production of space. Space and place is being produced by *relations* in space. Space is nothing without the things and the relation between the things. Therefore space *is* the relation, in the same way the power is just a relation. Therefore, power is produced in a similar way as space is produced; by the interaction and motion of the objects within (Foucault 1993, p. 126)

I will use this line of thinking of relational space, just as described before, but also the thought of relational power. I will conduct my study by trying to read the power implications between objects. To make this more understandable, I mean to investigate the power implications of the new comprehensive plan of Malmö. I shall also investigate how space is being produced in five chosen shopping malls in Malmö. I will use the entire theoretical framework that I have so far explored to understand my areas of study and relate them to these concepts.

Summing up

To sum up this part of the essay I will visualize what I mean in a table. When looking at the different concepts I have explored we might now see a pattern of dialectics emerging, where we might find two concepts in relation to one another, yet moving in different directions and being in conflict.

Part 2: Modernity as a vision

Places of modernity

I have so far focused on the theoretical framework of this essay. It is comprehensive because the concept of modernity is a very complex issue. Furthermore, it takes a solid theoretical foundation to examine modernity in relation to the city. What I now aim to do is to relate this theoretical frame to the city of Malmö and investigate places which could be considered modernist, but also to conclude in which ways they differ from that concept. It could of course be argued that the entire city is a modernist creation and that evidence of this could be found all most anywhere. Yet, I believe that there are places which typify modernism more than others and through these places we might understand the rest of the city better.

One example of such a place is the modern shopping mall. As we shall see, the modern shopping mall is constantly reinventing itself to correspond to the expectations of excitement and spectacle that is demanded of it. The flâneur, though not in the same fashion as 1900th century France, is still present today and a very important figure in the production of modern space (Crang 1998, p.53–54).

However, what I primarily shall aim to investigate is examples of typical modernist thinking, which I before have introduced as the “Utopia project”. This line of thought, I think, is especially clear when you look at the vision of the future Malmö. This vision is especially evident in the new comprehensive plan of Malmö and I shall therefor use that as a foundation for understanding contemporary visionary planning. This modernist tradition could, as I have written before, be understood both in a modernist historical perspective, but also not the least by looking at the dialectic relationship between the Gemeinschaft and, indeed, the Gesellschaft.

The comprehensive plan and sustainable development

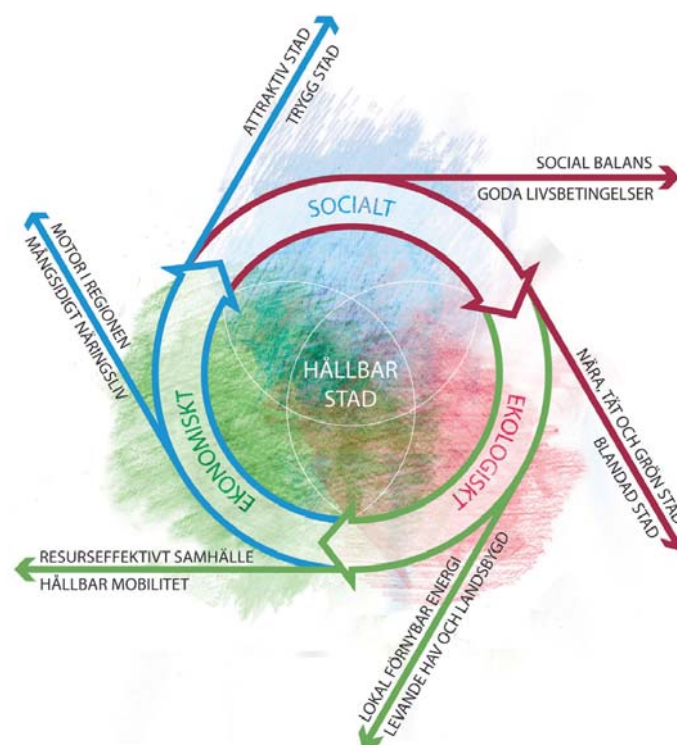
**“The future citizen of Malmö will be sustainable and have sustainable consumption habits”
- Malmö Comprehensive Plan 2012**

The modernist thinking in the comprehensive plan becomes apparent when considering the shift that has occurred from solid planning to a more visionary style. What characterizes the new comprehensive plan is the tendency to be elusive and not so specific on how the city is actually going to develop. It rather takes on a visionary approach, which are based on certain values that will guide planners in their everyday work. Even though it lies in the nature of a comprehensive plan to be visionary, because it's meant to give a picture of how the city should look like in the future, the new plan takes it one step further and makes the vision the sole target of the plan. The former comprehensive plans have the character of an aggregated version of an area plan, which means that the details of what is going to be built and what is not going to be built is very specific and often visualized on several maps that could be directly translated down to area planning and the specific neighbourhood in question. However, the new comprehensive plan is illusive and dim with specific plans. It

begins with a story of what the future Malmö looks like 2032. It does, of course, paint a very picture of Malmö, where the problems of the past are nothing but a memory and the city has archived all its goals. But it is also a story of a constructed present. In order to produce a vision, there must be a description of what is right now. The city of Malmö is said to have been going through a change the last 15 years, but the words they are using the comprehensive plan is actually “a metamorphosis”; transformation. Malmö is described as the bird Fenix, revived out of the ashes of the past and unmodern industrialist area to embrace the future. To describe the development like this is also a general tendency of modernist visionary planning. It relies upon the assumption that tomorrow is always better than yesterday. The city defines itself by describing its past tragedy and how it escaped them (Malmö stad 2011, p. 7 – 9).

This focus on visionary planning with values and words, can indeed very much be seen as a way of reinventing the modernist thinking of the 1900th century. In the vision the city becomes more than just the pavement, the glass and steel; it becomes an entity in its own right. Malmö is a dynamic *Gesellschaft*, in which the citizens live and thrive, expressing their individuality and yet they are being a part of something bigger than themselves. The comprehensive plan becomes a vision of how the city wants to be *perceived*, not just in the future but even more so right now.

Perhaps the most prominent of these values is sustainable development. It could be said to be the core of the comprehensive plan's structure. Like a nexus for all future development is “the triangle of sustainability”, which includes the social, the ecological and the economical (see picture below) (Malmö stad 2011, p. 16).



The circle (or triangle) of sustainability

The concept of sustainability can in many ways be said to have set the tone for a lot of the discussions of late, especially discussions concerning ecology and the environment. But as

we can see in the comprehensive plan of Malmö, it is also being applied to several other areas as well. Malmö has made sustainability to its overall guiding value and, as I wrote before it transcends the vision of urban planning to also incorporate a vision of the individual in Malmö. As quoted above "*the future citizen of Malmö will be sustainable and have sustainable consumption habits*" is only one of many examples of this tendency. But what this kind of approach to planning does is in fact revealing its essence. Urban planning is more about people than about houses. For without the people the houses would be useless; their function would become obsolete. The interesting thing here, however, is the tendency of trying to plan *who* the person should be that inhabits the future city. This has been argued to create a division between the wanted citizen and the unwanted. This has been argued to be an expression of neo-liberal city planning. However, without deprecating this notion, it could also be argued that this is a part of a greater modernist tradition of visionary planning and that, in fact; this tendency of planning with visionary means can be found in a great diversity of the political spectrum (Malmö stad 2011, p. 7), (Muktar-Landgren 2001, p. 150 - 158).

There are many examples of the vision of tomorrow that has been used during the 1900th century, but perhaps the most profound (and extreme) are the ones produced by the great totalitarian and semi-totalitarian regimes. No more evident is this than in the manifestos and writings of the Italian futurist and fascist Filippo Marinetti. Marinetti was a member of the avant garde futurist artists during the 20ties, but also took an immense interest in politics and city planning. The futurists, for many a surprise, was one of the most radical groups within the Italian fascist movement. In contrast to the national socialists of Germany, the futurist fascists did not view the family on countryside, or the *Landschaft*, as the most sacred part of society. The fascists, and in particular the futurists, saw the city of the future (in this case Rome) as the centre of all civilization. The *Stado Novo* (the new state) was to be created by fighting nature untouched by the city. It was through the experience of *putting land under the feet of man*, that they aimed to not only make way for the *Stado Novo*, but also to create the ideal fascist man. One example of this is when the marshlands outside Rome were turned to agricultural land. Mussolini claimed that the working men "re-enacted the war experience of world war one" which "made them men". Though, one must remember that the Italian fascist movement was much divided and the futurist by no means represented the entire Italian state at that time. It is however interesting to look at it as an example of an extreme ideological vision that had very clear intended geographies and that transcended both politics, art, land and the human subject (Payne p. 63, 90 – 93).

Even though extreme to its character, it proves a good example of how modernist thinking works and, indeed, it shows us how diverse the line of thinking can be inside the modernist conduct. We can see the same tendency in the communist regimes of Soviet, China and North Korea, but also in Robert Moses plans for modern New York. What makes these ideologies similar is not that they share common moral values, far from it. It is rather that they all share the vision of tomorrow as a central place of thought and vision. It could be argued that sustainability itself is such a vision, or at least a part of it. A protagonist value, that drives the thought of progress forward towards tomorrow (Berman 1995, p. 287 – 312).

What is peculiar with the concept sustainability is that it is undefined, which is of course one of the reasons why the comprehensive plan uses a very general and visionary language. When Councillor Karin Svensson of the social democratic party, was asked at a hearing why the concept is being used as it is in such undefined terms she replied that "sustainability is a personal thing and we all have to define what we see as sustainable for ourselves". This is a very important notion and lies, I think, at the very core of how the concept is being used

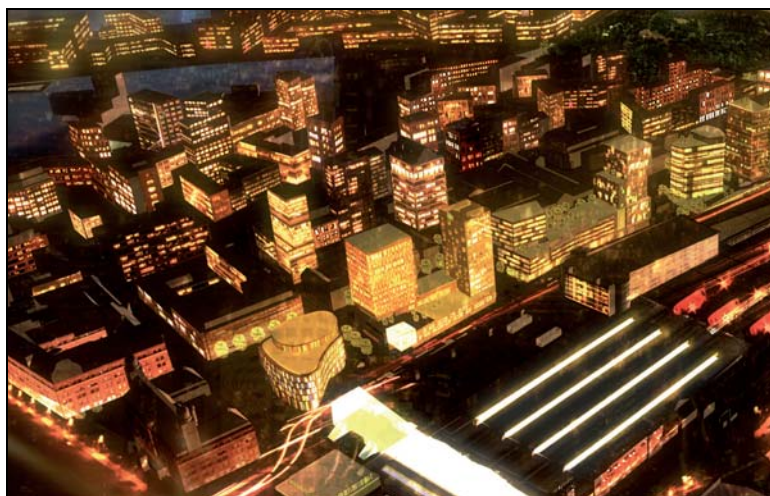
today and as we shall see it as interesting implications on the disjunction of means and ends. If the goal is sustainability undefined, then the means to reach the goal becomes equally undefined. Indeed, if it's a matter of personal opinion, it could be anything.

What we can see with sustainable development is the lack of accountability. The description of the problem is just as elusive as the solution to it. For example, the city of Hamburg called for a symposium which they called "the green cities of tomorrow." To this symposium, which I myself attended, a lot of students from around Europa were invited, along with the leading energy cooperation's of Germany. Even though the very same cooperation's could be said to be a part of the problem (for example Vattenfall is the largest producer of coal power in Germany), they also gained the privilege to formulate the solution. If sustainability is in fact a matter of personal opinion, then it could also be argued that there is a possibility of for these companies to be biased. It is derived from the very same notion of disassociation that we have seen before; separation of mean and ends. Without going in to details, this could imply that this phenomenon can be seen on both a macro and a micro scale (Hamburg stad 2011, p. 1 – 19).

Images of tomorrow, today

One thing that is very particular about the comprehensive plan is that it is filled with visionary pictures. Of course, being a document that is supposed to be visionary, it is not a surprise. What we can see, however, it the way in which the images is being used. We find both pictures that is real photographs of Malmö as it is, but they are few. The most frequently used images are visionary to their character.

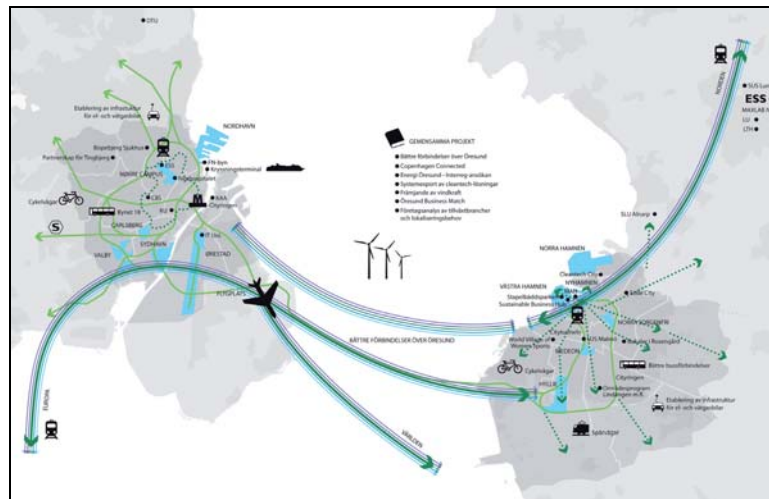
I'd like to draw attention to one of these images that I find particularly interesting, which is a visionary picture of the new area Oljehamnen and the central station. It has received the unofficial name "The Manhattan of Malmö" on internet discussion boards, which I find amusing. It looks, indeed, a lot like Manhattan and it has a futuristic glow to it. When I asked the manager of the strategic unit of the urban office about this picture he stated that "we only use it as a visionary picture to help people imagine the city of tomorrow. There is very small chance that this area, even though it will be rebuilt, will look anything like this."



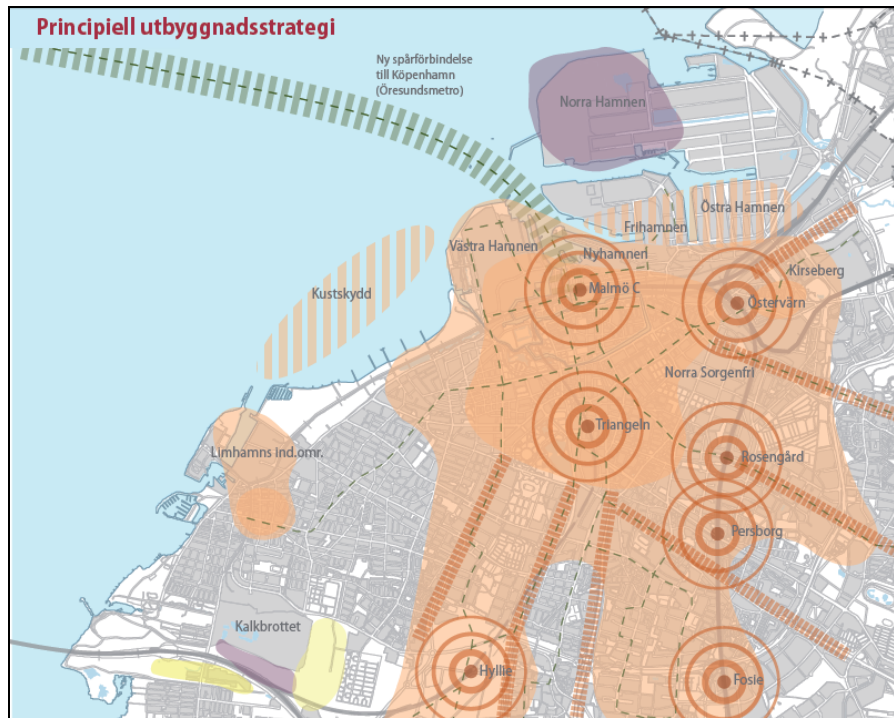
(Malmö stad 2011, p 47)

What I find interesting in this is of course the glitch between what is real and what is vision. There is nothing in the text connected to the picture that suggests that this is not going to be reality. Rather, it implies that the plans are already good to go. Another employee of the same unit makes the remark that kind of pictures are good, because it helps in citizens of Malmö “familiarize themselves with the idea of sky scrapers and towers”. It could therefore be argued that the strategy of putting visionary picture not only in the comprehensive plan, but also in other places, such as Malmö stads website and several other brochures, is a conscious plan of creating a vision of the city of tomorrow. As I have stated before, the idea of a vision is that it seems to be far away in the future, when it’s in fact right here and now. For example, the vision of Oljehamnen is being produced right now and the image of the future place is created in the minds of the readers and beholders of the pictures. This is a very important aspect of the production of space, because it has serious implications on how the citizens of Malmö perceive the city right now (Malmö stad 2011, p 47) .

Of course, another very important visual aspect of any kind of plan is the use of the map. There are several example of this in the comprehensive plan. What I find interesting with all of them is that they, too, mix vision and reality together to produce something new. For example, we might take a look at this map of the Öresund region.



The map is a mix of what is there now and what is planned in the future. The picture forms an entirety of the vision of the city. This picture shows us what the planners of the region wants it to look like when it’s all done. What the picture shows are all the greater infrastructural and “hard” investments in the region, both now and in the future. What is missing in this picture, of course, is everything else. It can of course be argued that this kind of map is needed to explain what kind of investments the city is going to do and what the big picture looks like in the future, but it also serves as a compass which shows what the city actually values the highest. This map is one of three maps in the comprehensive plan. One of the other I shall investigate further on. The comprehensive plan is said to serve as a value tool, from which planners and decision makers of the city shall derive consultations on how the city is going to be shaped (Malmö stad 2011, p 33).



This is the comprehensive map of Malmö (Malmö stad 2011, p. 42 – 43)



Returning to the visualization of the city of tomorrow we might look at this picture of Malmö. It is a very typical picture of the comprehensive plan and it shows Malmö and Copenhagen in the distance, in the same way as we saw before on the map of the bigger projects of the region. But everything is pushed together so that we might see everything at once. Indeed, in this picture, Malmö is only consisting of these projects. Everything else has been taken away, or is shadowed. We see here again why vision is such an important aspect of modernity. The city *becomes* something in the picture or in the eyes of the beholder; it's being produced. We might take in the entirety of Malmö in just one glance and the vision is born in our perception of it (Malmö stad 2011, p 31).

From this point of view the picture seems to have been taken from a field in a rural area near Malmö, and Malmö itself has a rural feel to it. Tönnis saw the Gemeinschaft as typical rural and we are here presented with a Gemeinschaft of Malmö, looking like a picturesque village, with strange out of place buildings. The retracking and recreation and want for the Gemeinschaft pulls through the cloudy and incomprehensible Gesellschaft or what Malmö actually looks like, to for utopia. Everything seems close and near at hand; only a bike tour away.

“The fourth room of the city”

In the comprehensive plan there is a section what is devoted to what is called “the fourth room of the city”. The other three rooms, it states, is the home, the workplace and public spaces. The comprehensive plan suggests to include one more room, which it describes as a private – public room for creative meetings, work and leisure. It is, by most descriptions, the function of a public space in a private – public setting. This has interesting implications on how the shopping malls of Malmö, as we shall see in the next part of the essay, try to brand themselves as places for creative meetings. There is also great emphasis on the division between what’s inside and outside. In the text it is said that in the fourth room of the city “the relationship between what’s inside and what is outside thrives”. This notion can be linked directly of how we may experience the shopping mall. We will see that the link between the inside and outside is an essential part of understanding modern Malmö (Malmö stad 2011, p 25 - 26).

Creating Gemeinschaft through dialogue

In recent years, Malmö stad has conducted a series of different projects with different sustainability goals. Most of these projects have employed young adults (between the ages of 18 – 30 years). It has been argued by the political opposition (Moderaterna) that these are attempts to lower the unemployment statistics and strengthen the ruling parties’ position in the city. Whether or not that is true is not a discussion for this essay. It can however be argued that these kind of projects have been one of the prime methods of coming to terms with many of the social problems the city has to deal with.

There are several of these projects and I will not dwell on examining them all in this essay. However, I find two of these projects to be of great interest. One of these projects is the democracy ambassadors (Demokrati ambassadörerna), which was a project launched just before the last election 2010 with an aim to involve and spread awareness of the elections amongst first time voters. Even though the project was initiated by the social democratic party, the project itself was politically independent. Great effort was put into reaching out to the areas in Malmö that, in the previous elections, have had the lowest participation rate. It could be argued that this project, among others, aims to recreate a sense of community within the chaotic city, for which the subjects lack identification with. Another, and a more recent project, is UngBo 12. As with all the greater Swedish cities, housing, especially for young adults is a big problem.

The citizen consultation of the comprehensive plan

As a democratic principle, each plan that is produced must go through a process of citizen consultation before it can be adopted. In the process the citizens have a chance to make comments and demand changes in the plan and the planners must then go back and review the plan on the basis of these comments and, if necessary, change the plans. These

processes, however good their intent, seldom leads to a lot of participation. New methods of outreaching during this process are there for often tried, in order to stir up the public interest. Having worked with outreaching project and citizen dialogue before, I myself had the good fortune to be employed to work with this bit of the comprehensive plan. A method we had developed in an earlier project was applied to this one, which revolved around the idea of “being where the citizens are” with a mobile information unit.

During two months of the summer of 2011 we worked with gathering opinions about the new comprehensive plan and how the future Malmö should look like. We gathered comments and opinions and then compiled them in a report that was then handed to the political board of the urban planning office. It is easy to conclude that it’s hard for people to have a general opinion about the future of the city and that this opinion will vary greatly from person to person. While being a human geographer and working for the urban planning office, I devote more than my full work week debating, working, thinking and discussing these issues. It is there for easy for me to have several profoundly phrased opinions about how the future urban development of the city should look like. Indeed, if someone had asked me in the same manner as I asked people on the streets of Malmö they would probably have chased me away for taking up to much of their time. However, for a person that most often has nothing to do with urban planning or the issues revolving around it, it can indeed be very hard to formulate a structured opinion in the matter when asked (Malmö stad 2011, p 1).

What I found to be very interesting, and which also will lead to the next part of this essay, is the frequency of the issue of the shopping malls. If there was something that people had an opinion about it was why there were so many shopping malls in Malmö and what part of the sustainability plan they belonged to. For me it was a hard question to answer, since in fact the shopping malls of Malmö are not mentioned at all in the plan. Yet, it was evident that people saw this as typifying for the contemporary urban development process. I asked myself then; “how does the shopping malls of Malmö relate to the vision of the future Malmö?” It is this question, as you may have noted, that is the foundation for this essay. In the next part I shall explore the shopping malls of Malmö and analyse their implications on the modern vision of Malmö, in relation to the theoretical framework set up in part one.

Part 3: Places of modernity

Emporia, the great shopping malls and reinventing the arcades

“To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. The spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito; he is the flâneur”

- Charles Baudelaire

If we look at contemporary examples of modernist thinking in Malmö, we will quickly find a lot of interesting things. The reinvention of the shopping malls is perhaps the most striking modernist feature. Malmö has in a very short time become the most shopping mall-dense city in all of Sweden.

Two years after Entré was opened, the largest and greatest shopping mall in Scandinavia opened its doors in the city district of Hyllie. Emporia, as the shopping mall is named, is a vast structure and, ironically, is one of the first things you see when entering the city by car from the south.

Together, these great shopping malls make Malmö unique in a Scandinavian perspective. Nowhere else in this part of the world is there as many malls per person as in Malmö. This was also one, if not the most, discussed topics when the new comprehensive plans was out on dialog in the summer of 2011; why are there so many malls here? For many people living in Malmö, a city plagued by shortage of housing, rising homelessness and crime, this indeed seemed like a peculiar trend. An anonymous old man even said that “Entré is a stain upon the consciousness of Malmö. Every time I see that “black rock” I think of all the bad things that has befallen this city of late”.

The head of the strategic unit of the planning office in Malmö stated that “if people didn’t shop at the malls so much, then they wouldn’t build new ones”. However true that notion might be, the investors of Emporia claim to use what they call an “American mall ratio”. In the states, several surveys have concluded that, by average, a certain percentage of the population shop at a malls, rather than stores by the side walk. With that in mind, it is therefore possible to build new shopping malls up to a certain point at which the market is saturated. In Malmö and indeed in other Scandinavia cities, this percentage is not said to be reach yet. Therefore, it is possible to keep building and investing. If this model proves to be working in a European context is yet to be proved.

As stated before, Malmö has a lot of malls in different forms and sizes, with Emporia and Entré just being the latest contributions. With the introduction of these two new giants, the competition after citizens regularly shopping at malls is tightening. The older malls are all reinventing and renewing themselves in different ways to meet the new challenge. As we shall see, both the construction of new shopping malls and reinvention of the older ones have implications that are very interesting to look at from a modernist perspective. In the following section I shall therefore investigate the concepts I presented in my theoretical framework in relation to five of the bigger shopping malls in Malmö.

Emporia



**“Long live the freedom of choice!”
- Emporia**

Emporia is built to be an “oasis from the busy city life”. The building itself is meant to be inspirational and transparent, but at the same time “form a bubble around you”. The aim is to encapsulate you and make you forget your troubles and instead be amazed by all you see inside. This notion of the shopping mall being something more than just a mall is something that is typical for modernist thinking; becoming something more than it actually is. Perhaps Emporia, of all shopping malls in Malmö, is the most evident example of this (<http://www.emporia.se/Om-Emporia/> 2013).

We can easily relate this to how space is being produced by considering all three dimensions of Lefebvre’s triangle of space production

Hyllie, the area in which Emporia is located, is a place of radical transformation. Emporia, and the neighbouring new Malmö Arena, are the first to grand projects in the plan of “new Hyllie”.

A very interesting aspect of the new Hyllie is of course the old Hyllie. The neighbouring communities are characterized by “the million program” buildings and have the highest unemployment in Malmö. Even though plans existed to try to link the old Hyllie with the new Hyllie, a new freeway-route was completed two years ago, effectively dividing the two areas from one another. When asked, the director of the urban planning office said that “*if the plans had been made today, then we would have made sure that a large part of the freeway was put underground so that the areas could correspond.*” I can’t help but think about Steve Bermans classic account of how Robert Moses grand modernist plans for New York lead to the demolition of central Bronx and the erection of a freeway. I think this phenomenon, whether intended or not, could be said to be the aggregated behaviour of what Tönnies saw as *the disassociation between means and ends*. The grand plans and visions collide with reality and get tangled up so that, in the end, something entirely different than intended is produced.

Emporia is intended to be a place of seclusion; a new world within a city. The place is perfectly constructed to be sensible for the visitor, but also for the visitor to comprehend the place in a certain way. Like no other mall in Malmö, Emporia is a bubble which you enter to experience something new. The emphasis on experience and the mall as a point of rendezvous and a place for social meeting could be argued to be a new way of using the social production of space. Even though it is indeed a place for consumption, it is

constructed as such to seem like it is much more. But I think it is even more than what John Allan called the Potsdammer Platz; a place of seductive power. Indeed, Emporia itself could be said to have a seductive effect on people visiting and experiencing, but if we look at it from a modernist perspective it is a way of reinventing the Gemeinschaft by structuring the Gesellschaft in a certain way. It is not one or the other, but it could be argued to be both at the same time. It is in the tension between the small and the big, the far away and the close, that modernity is being produced by the beholder; the flâneur. Emporia is constructed in a certain way and to have a certain function, but it is its visitors that produce the space in its entirety, for it is them that give it function and meaning (<http://www.emporia.se/Om-Emporia/>).

Perhaps the most striking feature of Emporia is the in which it is a mix of public and private space. In between the stores, shops and cafés on every floor there are spaces for resting and with free activities. There is also a park on top of the roof, from which you may survey all of Malmö. From this grand vista you see both the Öresund Bridge and the skyscraper Turning Torso clearly. This connects to the idea of the fourth room of the city as being a place of private public character.

Let us return to the idea of Emporia as a bubble again, for it has very interesting implications. What we may find along this line of thought is, as I wrote before, a world within a world. Perhaps not the most unique concept of a shopping mall, but it is perfected in Emporia to encompass everything. The difference between the inside and the outside is striking, as if two different worlds. When looking out it is almost as if looking through the looking glass at the world beyond. Hence, Emporia brings together the concept of the city as a spectacle; something new waits around every corner. All visitors become the flâneurs of the space they walk through, as if inside a kaleidoscope of joy. Just as many other shopping malls Emporia crystalizes the ends towards which people work; it is the fruit of labour. On Emporia's website we may read the message that "Emporia is a place free from demands and burdens". It seeks to be a world detached from the rest of society, where different rules are in play and where everything is possible. We can recognize this line of thought from the concept of utopia and envisionments of the perfect place.

Entré

“The building is incused with light and space. The glass facades, the choice of materials and the design all comes together to form what we call *the feeling of Entré*”



Having even before had its fair share of shopping malls, the opening of Entré in 2010 was seen by many as a doomed project. The huge building is a prime example of modern architecture. When coming from the freeway by car from the north it is the first thing that greets you when arriving and hence its name. The structure is a big cube, built out of steel and glass. It's black surface is light up during night time and colours the facade in purple, red and pink. The building plan of the Entré was accepted by the communal board in the middle of the 90ties crisis, when the city was in very dear need of investments of any kind to turn the tide. But, as the urban development director of Malmö said; “if it were today, some 15 years later, the building plan would not have been accepted”.

When walking inside the shopping mall there are several things that are striking. Perhaps the most significant is the way in with the structure is planned. Even though boxlike from the outside, you get the feeling of being inside a nexus with its vortex centred at the entrance.

A typical way of referring to the modern city in literature is by the description: “a jungle of steel and glass”. In this, Entré is certainly no exception. One gets the feeling of walking inside cube of glass, suspended by a steel frame; even part of the roof is made out of glass. This creates the illusion of no actually being inside at all, but rather on the other side of the sidewalk. Outside, the busy city reminds the visitor of the disordered and stressful life in the Gesellschaft. Inside, however, the visitor is affected by neither noise nor weather. Yet, the inside and the outside connect and extend the horizon and boarder of the shopping mall to make it seem like a part of the city itself. We might even sit down for a cup of coffee and overlook the busy freeway and the cars entering the city. Calmly, we feel detached from what we see, yet apart of it. We are in fact sitting in the entrance of Malmö and watching the flow of life in the city, seemingly rushing through, and around, the shopping mall.

Entré is all about the vision of the visitor. A very important aspect of creating the environment is the possibility of, if you will, “flâneuring”. With a total of three floors, ever one of them is transcended by a middle hollow open space, through which the escalator carries people up and down. But it also means that the interior is open so that you may at all times be aware of how big the place is. While riding the elevator you may not only see the far reaching end of every one of the three corridors with rows of shops and boutiques, but also a part of what the other floors have to offer. At the same time you can see both the sky and the street outside, which makes riding the elevator like turning a kaleidoscope of commodities, people inside and outside, cars, coffee shops and interior design. To make it even grander, the floors are made of polished marbles, which is cleaned and polished several

times a day. By reflecting ever impression around you, the floor becomes a part of the vision too. The experience of steel and glass in its essence, the shops and commodities, ever so orderly lined up in the corridors, seems to be a part of a bigger turbulent labyrinth without end. We may see other contemporary examples of the same kind of architecture, as the student library Orkanen, which is the same exposes the outside to the inside and have an open central space in the centre of the building, connecting all floor by sight of the visitor.

Remember the tension between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. As we know, modernist thinking has a lot to do with the relationships in space between the things and places. In Entré we may see this tension by the way in which everything is both close and convenient, yet played upon as being far away and apart of something much bigger; a commotion. It becomes a little bit like standing between two mirrors; you are there, and yet, you are also endlessly far away; reproduced. Looking back at the quote in the beginning of this section, it is this that they have termed *the feeling of Entré*

(<http://www.entremalmo.se/shopping/malmo/butik/om-entre.php>).

Despite this, the real entrance to Entré is not very well exposed. Even though centred on the entrance of Malmö by car, the shopping mall is somewhat sealed from the rest of environment for pedestrians. There is an entrance out towards the square of Värnhem, but it is very small and the grand parlour of the building does not show for this direction. Instead, you walk into an older building, through which a corridor takes you to the main building of Entré.

Entré has invested a lot to reinvent itself as “more than just a shopping mall”. It was meant to be a place of experience and where you meet people. This change of self-image goes for every one of the five malls I have chosen to look at and corresponds to what the comprehensive plan calls “the fourth room of the city”, as I wrote before. It becomes clear for the visitor of Entré that there are not many places to sit, which doesn’t require you to buy something. Entré as a place of experiences and creative meetings as both crystalized in the entertainment section of the shopping malls, which includes a cinema and a bowling alley, but also in the many cafés and restaurants that have prime locations overlooking the grand vista of the freeway and the industrial areas beyond. Entré aims to be a concept that includes more than just shopping.

Tönnis argues, as I wrote before, about the disassociation between means and ends; the work we do has often nothing to do with what makes us happy. Work is what we do to achieve something else; happiness elsewhere. With this in mind we might consider the modern shopping mall to be the place where one goes to make use of the means; money.

Triangeln

“The Triangle is, and continues to be, a rendezvous for everyone that sojourns in Malmö”



To the left interior, upper right vision of future of Triangle, lower right exterior viewed from the front

Perhaps its most striking feature is its architectural resemblance to the arcades in 1900th century Paris. The place Triangeln was from the beginning a central hub for the tramlines in Malmö and become even more so a central point during the Baltic Exhibition 1917. Having always been a point of transition, Triangeln is both a place you go *to* and go *through*. The shopping mall is not that old. It was built, along with a skyscraper hotel, 1989 and has since then seen two major renovations and expansions, apart for the newest expansion. It is perhaps the roof that leads ones thought to the old arcades, for it is made mostly out of glass, which gives the visitor a feeling of being outside while in doors (<http://www.triangeln.com/triangeln.aspx>).

The interior is opened up to reveal a “main street”, which could be said to serve as an extension of the shopping avenue outside. The main street gives the feeling of actually walking along an ordinary street and the high walls on each side enhance this effect. In this way Triangeln becomes a small copy of Malmö itself; a universe within. The main street is broken up into “alley ways” and corridors that lead into the rest of the shopping mall. Here again we can see the same tendency of ordered disorder within the frame of the building. However, unlike for example Entré, it is not a question of working with the outside as a counter for what’s inside, but rather integrating the mall naturally into the urban setting.

We can understand Triangeln best as a place both of transition and transformation. It is located to be a natural part of the area, through which people can walk to and from the new train station, hence making it a location that people go through. It is at the same time evident that Triangeln is remaking itself to meet the now competition. The new plan consists of expanding and renovating the entire shopping mall, but also to renew the concept of Triangeln.

Perhaps then more than other malls in Malmö Triangeln really tries to brand it self a new. What is amplified in their latest video and what also can be seen as their “nich” is the concept

of the urban life. "Always available, always there and always attractive" is a motto repeated often. The need for constant reinvention is especially important for places like Triangeln, to avoid drowning in the crowd of shopping malls (http://www.triangeln.com/om_1.aspx).

Conclusions

Modernist values, neo-liberal planning

As I wrote before, in recent years, it has been argued that Malmö in many aspects has become guided by neo-liberal values. What tends to be forgotten in this debate is the reflection of what would not be neo-liberal planning? And are all these processes of a product of neo-liberal thinking or is it perhaps something else?

I would not argue against the evidence that Malmö, just as most other cities of today, has changed its course. However, I would want to argue that many of these processes is a part of a tradition of modernist thinking, on which western society and values have been and are being built. Neo-liberalism is a part of this tradition, but so is most other ideological views of our time; socialism, fascism, capitalism etc. It is the thought, the vision and the drive of the future progress that characterizes modernism. I would not say that the political undercurrents of city planning and development are of no consequence, but I feel there must be a distinction between the real ways of conduct.

It could be argued that this new explosion of places of consumption in Malmö is a reinvention of the arcades of the 1900th century, such as the ones in Paris, but there are important differences. In the chaotic city the shopping malls become oases of difference.

The shopping mall as places of radical disassociation

As we have seen throughout this essay, a very important aspect of modernity is the concept of disassociation in different ways. Tönnies describes this in the *Gesellschaft* as the separation between ends and means. On another level, Habermas sees modernity as the separation between art, ethics and logic. Following this line of thought, places of modernity is in fact places that shows signs of disassociation; spaces that are in fact being produced as a consequence of the tension of this separation. What we also have to understand is that this separation is both physical and psychological.

The shopping malls can partly be seen in this way. It is not only a matter of function, but even more so a way of reflecting our society as a *Gesellschaft*. There is a strong drive to make sense of an incomprehensible society by creating places where things come together and become understandable. The shopping malls of Malmö are places where this becomes evident in a number of ways, but perhaps most directly in the separation between what is within and what is without. It does not become a question of what the shopping mall is or not is, but in the tension that is created by segregation. The space of the shopping mall is produced and is perceived as a mix of both. It is both a turbulent and a sensible place of consumption and experiences.

There are many similarities between the different malls that I have analysed in this essay, but each of them is of course also unique and a product in its own right. What is evident, however, is that they all share a foundation of how they are produced and reinvented; they all play upon the same modernist principles, but use it differently. As the title of this section suggest, I believe them to be what I call places of radical disassociation. By this, I mean that the shopping malls that I have studied is built and produced by the principles of

disassociation and can therefore be said to be a crystallization of modernity within the city. The city of Malmö is a city of modernity, but not all of Malmö is modern as such as the principles that I have laid out through this essay suggests. However, there are places which modernity along these lines indeed are present more than elsewhere and that could be argued to be the shopping mall. This is especially evident, because the shopping malls are said to be more than just shopping malls; it is, in a way, a vision of utopia. It becomes the fulfilment and the end of the means that we use to achieve it. This is also what ties the malls together and make the similar. They all share a perspective of endlessness and at the same time as they use a finite setting to make it and the visitor a part of something different.

Dissecting and understanding the principles of modernity gives us important tools to understand both our society and ourselves. The essence lies within the dialectic relationships of the *things within space*, and by looking at the relationship we may understand that *the things* are not in things in their own right, but are in fact produced and defined by things in its surroundings. Even though this can be said to be true of any era in time, what makes our society today different is that it rests upon the foundation that this is not true.

Because of the establishment of Emporia, the competition between shopping malls has exceeded former levels. It has become increasingly important to be avant garde and stand out from the crowd. My ambition is not to investigate further on what details concerning this expansion, but it is interesting to see how this reinventing is at the same time triggering the same modernist ideas that created the shopping mall in the first place. Looking beyond the shopping mall as a capitalist place for consumption, we might also see that it is in fact here that we may observe modernism in its essence.

Modernity as envisionments of utopia

I have also concerned myself a great deal with the vision of modernity and society as being envisioned. Building upon modernity as a tension between different concepts, envisionments can be said to be a disassociation in time. As Lefebvre argued, space is being produced by the people with association with the space. We perceive and conceive spaces as having a past, a present and the future. We give it meaning through a mix of all three of these dimensions, when we think of what a place has been before, how we perceive it now, but what is most typically modern is the thought of what the place will look like tomorrow. The modern city is born through the envisionments of what is to come and this is certainly also true of Malmö. The comprehensive plan shows how the city is undergoing metamorphosis all the time to constantly become something new and better. Especially the envisionments of what Malmö will be in the year of 2032 is utopian, because it is envisioned as a place where all of Malmö's problems are solved and all the goals are reached. Here, again, we might look at disassociation between means and ends; what is wanted and how it is achieved. It is again a matter of separation of the two, with no clear explanation of how the two will eventually meet. This is how the perception of the better tomorrow is produced; it is an inherent contradiction of space. The vision of the better tomorrow cannot be achieved, because it is a part of today. The vision is, in fact, the drive for reaching something else, but it is not the ends, even though it seems to be and is explained that way. Following the line of thought, the means to reach Malmö's vision of 2032 is in fact the vision itself; it becomes both the ends and the means of creating the modern city. In this way we might

understand Malmö as a city in constant need for reinventing itself achieving by producing an endless perspective of possibilities of fulfilment, never to be reached.

Gemeinschaft as a force inside Gesellschaft

I have tried to lay out the basic principles for Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft according to Tönnies original book with the same title. I've found that it is in fact possible to link the concept of the Gemeinschaft with the thought of Utopia. Gemeinschaft can very well be seen as a force within the Gesellschaft, but I deem it better to think of it as a part of the greater dialectic relationship within society as such, forming the relational space. When observing the shopping malls of Malmö it is evident that there is a force trying to find its way back to what is sensible and coherent, even though perhaps not rational. It can be said that within the Gesellschaft there often a drive from individual forces to go back, in a sense, to the Gemeinschaft or reinvent a new one. The shopping mall is a comprehensible place within a rational, yet dizzyingly incoherent society. Things come together in the shopping mall, just as things come together in the Gemeinschaft. It is, of course, not a black and white issue. The shopping mall can indeed be seen as the triumphant top of the Gesellschaft, because it is a product of rational thinking and a contrast to the natural, most evident in terms of the disassociation and separation. However, that does not mean that there might be a pull back towards what's natural. It can in fact be argued that the shopping mall consists of both Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft; it is produced in the tension between the two.

Especially we may see this in the way in which the malls are both structured and disordered. They are meant to be a place of commotion, where you are flung into it's on world to be a part of in and yet stand alone. At the same time it is a place of rational consumption and organized movement. It is also a very defined space, but at the same time an extension of the city outside. This notion comes to life in a number of different ways, but perhaps most evident in the case of Triangeln, where the surroundings are essential in creating and producing the intended space. Seclusion and separation can also be said to be extensions of the room out in the city, as in the case of Emporia. Here, Malmö is meant to be closed off to the visitor so that she might distance herself from the everyday life and enter a new world of happiness to utilize the ends towards which her ordinary life in the city is leading up to.

Geographies of modernity

I also want to stress a very important issue on the matter of the geographies of modernity. It is clear that the modern age and modernity is a very complex thing about which it is hard to say exact things that might correspond for the entire spectra of things included in this concept. As I watch the shopping mall rise and stand out from the rest of the city I cannot help to feel that it might be one very important string through which modern society is being pulled forward into the future. I'm not in a position to compare place to place or frame by frame time move forward, for that does not lie in with in the frame of this study. But I do feel that I can conclude something about the shopping mall as being an essential part and, indeed a place, of contemporary modern expressions. It is the breaking point of disassociation and a place in which it is so real you might even walk through it. It goes beyond the capitalist market construction and into a more fundamental thought of how we, in our society conduct our lives. There is a section written by Torsten Hägerstrand in his book "Tillvaröäven" in which he states that civilization seems to form itself like a termite hive, rising tall and wondrous in the empty plain. It is built brick by brick and formed step by step

only in relation to the brick that was just laid out, without thought of the bigger picture. Even though I respect Häggerstrand's work in many ways, I must on this instance disagree. The modern society and civilization is formed and shaped by modernist principles, derived from the thought of the vision of tomorrow. It is born in the tension between expectations and expressions of ideas forming a greater picture than the individual. Even though, and this Häggerstrand pointed out, we as individuals are not capable of encompassing the entire picture with our minds, it is the collective process it draws its energy. Moving beyond the brick by brick thinking; striving towards ever distant ends never to be reached.

Final words

After making these conclusions I feel I have to declare that it is not my intention to judge on however Malmö's envisions of tomorrow is good or bad; it is simply a way for me and you the reader to acquaint you're self with modernism. Vision is such a strong part of modernism that it simply could not exist without it, but that does not say anything about how that vision could look like and in this essay it has not been my ambition to judge whether or not Malmö's vision of the future is good or bad.

Summary

In this essay I want to investigate three of the shopping malls in Malmö and the new comprehensive plan and relate them to the concept of modernity. Modernity, or the modern age, is said to be the time from the renaissance to the present. Habermas argues that this period is defined and can be understood as the separation between art, logic and ethics. Ferdinand Tönnies see it as a period typified by the *Gesellschaft* (society) which is has to be rational and impersonal because it is disordered. The modern city is *Gesellschaft* in its essence. *Gemeinschaft* (community), on the other hand, is it's contrast and typified by rural life with natural law without a sovereign.

Space is relational, because it is defined by the relationship between the things within it. These relationships can be understood as being produced. Henri Lefabvre argues that there are three types of space that comes together as one: the material space (which are the physical structures), representations of space (which are maps and plans) and representational space (which are our ideas of a place).

In this essay I have tried to bring together these concepts to understand contemporary modernism in Malmö. I have used the new comprehensive plan to exemplify modernist thinking as visionary and five shopping malls as examples of modernism as a place of disassociation.

The shopping malls can be said to form a part of the geographies of modernity in Malmö. This is evident due to their function as a place of disassociation and separation from means and ends, but also as places of tension between the *Gemeinschaft* and the *Gesellschaft*.

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