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Investigations of city-crisis dialectics

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The Rise (and Fall?) of Post-Industrial Malmö

Investigations of city-crisis dialectics

Ståle Holgersen



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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

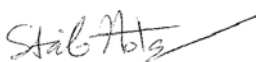
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To be defended at Världen, 1st floor, Geocentrum 1. 14 April. 1pm.

Faculty opponent

Professor David Harvey, City University of New York

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Title and subtitle: The rise (and fall?) of post-industrial Malmö - investigations in city-crisis dialectics.		
Abstract		
<p>This thesis aims to investigate the dialectics between urban planning and policy on the one hand and economic change and crises in the city of Malmö on the other, with a focus on both the city in general and the specific district of Western Harbour.</p> <p>Malmö provides a (highly) fascinating place to investigate relations between urban and economic change. The city embraced the industrial path longer than many other Western cities, only to crash into a severe crisis in the 1980s and early 1990s. In the mid-1990s the city embraced a “post-industrial” strategy, and from this point onward urban changes became resolute and drastic. Less than a decade later the image of the city had fundamentally changed. But the international economy that served as foundation for the post-industrial city proved to be crisis-prone, and the 2008 crisis especially called this urban-economic arrangement into question.</p> <p>This thesis answers two broad research questions: how did Malmö respond to (the “industrial” as well as the “current” economic) crises? What characterises Malmö’s transformation from an industrial to a post-industrial city and which strategies have been mobilised? Based on semi-structured interviews, written material and secondary sources (in particular municipal planning and policy documents), four theoretical papers seek to investigate these issues. I argue that Malmö met the current crisis by actively continuing to develop the “post-industrial” city that had evolved starting in the mid-1990s. The dissertation then draws parallels with the city response to the “industrial” crisis, and finds interesting similarities. Malmö, then and now, met the crisis by “building more of the same”. The dissertation also investigates the metamorphosis the city has gone through, and argues that <i>class</i> is a crucial component that must be understood in this process: not only in terms of distribution of money and wealth, but also in term of the production of the city. One strategy that has become important for Malmö has been to highlight “green” and “environmental” parts of the urban development to get out of the “industrial crisis”. The thesis conceptualises this in terms of a “green fix”.</p> <p>Theoretically the paper builds on four (related) fields of inquiry: i) urban theory, ii) dialectics, iii) crisis theory, and iv) planning and state theory. The latter two have undergone more thorough investigation, while I argue that discussions on (Marxists’) crisis theories within human geography would benefit from a broadening of the current perspective, and that urban planning should be conceptualised as a “condensation of social relations”.</p>		
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The Rise (and Fall?) of Post-Industrial Malmö

Investigations of city-crisis dialectics

Ståle Holgersen



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Today, as I am close to submitting this for print, I just got the news that people leaving an 8th of March gathering in Malmö last night were attacked by armed nazis. One of the absolute finest people I know in Malmö is still in the hospital, heavily injured. This dissertation is dedicated to him, and to all those confronting racism, fascism and nazism everyday, all over the world. ¡No pasarán!

List of papers

Paper I

Holgersen, S. (2014), Urban responses to the economic crisis: Confirmation of urban policies as crisis management in Malmö, in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 285-301.

Paper II

Holgersen, S. (2014) (accepted), Crisis and the post-industrial city. Or: Is Malmö building yesterday's city tomorrow, again?, in *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*.

Paper III

Holgersen, S. and A. Malm, "Green fix" as crisis management. Or: In which world is Malmö the world's greenest city? *Submitted to peer-reviewed journal*.

Paper IV

Holgersen, S. and G. Baeten, Beyond a liberal critique of "trickle down": class and city planning in Malmö. *Submitted to peer-reviewed journal*.

Paper V

Holgersen, S. (2013), Spatial planning as condensation of social relations: A dialectical approach, in *Planning Theory* (DOI: 10.1177/1473095213501672).

Paper VI

Holgersen, S. Marxist crisis theory, human geography and the post-industrial city. *Submitted to peer-reviewed journal*.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Karl Marx (1976a) claims that a bee puts architects to shame in the construction of her cells, but what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect raises structures in her imagination before erecting them in reality. However, Marx forgot to mention that the bee also possesses an advantage over the architect: as far as I know, the bee does not have to wake up to news that structural changes by other bees have rendered her cell out-dated, and that the cell must therefore be demolished. This is the reality in which we find city building under capitalism. I seek to understand how it works.

The construction of urban buildings under capitalism follows (destructive) cycles of booms and bust. Just as the tallest skyscrapers are normally built during booms and opened during crises,¹ so was Malmö's *Kockums Crane* the world's largest gantry crane when it opened in the spring of 1974. That year Kockums did not manage to sign a single contract, and the glory days of ship building in Malmö were already on the wane (Stigendal 1996). But it is not only buildings that relate to economic changes at large: so do cities, spaces and urban policies. When Malmö established a car factory in 1989 to replace the shipyard closed in 1986, the city's industrial era had moved well into overtime. Jumping to the present, at the time of writing a new "landmark" is under construction in the centre of Malmö: Malmö Live, consisting of three main parts; a concert hall with 'world-class acoustics', multiple stages for the Malmö Symphony Orchestra and a main auditorium with 1,600 seats; a hotel with 445 rooms, a spa and two restaurants – one being a sky bar on the 25th floor; and a congress centre, with the capacity, according to their website, for "3,000 people along with their ideas and creativity" (Malmolive 2014). This construction project occurs in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, when the only certainty seems to be economic uncertainty. The question I pose is as intriguing as it is impossible to answer at the time of writing: will Malmö Live – like the car factory at Western Harbour, be remembered as something built too late? Indeed, will it manifest itself as

1 Empire State Building completed in the great depression (1931) was the world's tallest until 1971, and Sears Tower, completed in 1974, held the position until 1998. Today's tallest skyscraper, Burj Khalifa in Dubai, was also built in a boom and opened in 2010 (Harvey 2011, Barclay Capital 2012, skyscraperpage.com).

a sort of tombstone over a post-industrial city of entrepreneurial hubris and landmark buildings that died around 2008?

The crisis that hit Europe in 2008 has generated many new experiences; many new ideas and new knowledge; many new openings and possibilities; but also many bankruptcies, and high levels of unemployment, poverty and depression (Harvey 2010a, 2011, Blackburn 2011, Aalbers (ed.) 2012, Krugman 2012a, Ekman 2013). That economic crises cause danger for destruction and degeneration is evident, but many also conflate crisis as a moment for opportunities and possibilities (Florida 2009, Murray 2009). But in what ways, and to what degrees, do cities grasp such opportunities?

This dissertation looks at the transformation from the industrial to the post-industrial city, and how the post-industrial city met the 2008 economic crisis. The city of Malmö acts as a highly appropriate field of study when investigating such issues. It is astonishing to see how processes of urban planning, capital accumulation and economic crises have unfolded in Malmö throughout the last decades – with the city district of Western Harbour (Västra Hamnen) as a stage where much of the drama has played out. Malmö embraced the industrial path longer than many other urban centers, only to steer into a more severe crisis than many (Stigendal 1996, Billing 2000, Sernhede and Johansson 2006, Dannestam 2009). This crisis got serious consequences for Malmö, as it also coincided with Sweden's financial crisis in the early 1990s. As the old industrial giant lay dead, meetings were held to discuss if the neighbouring city of Lund could resuscitate Malmö (Sydsvenskan 2009). Twenty years later the atmosphere has changed completely. Malmö no longer needs its little sister Lund; in fact, Malmö might claim offense if one calls it a suburb to Copenhagen – they are *twin cities*.

I find it reasonable to label the metamorphosis of Malmö from an industrial to post-industrial city as “standard-exceptional”: *standard* in the sense that it has manifested itself as a cliché of post-industrial cities – with spectacular (and environmentally friendly) architecture, sports stadiums, branding itself as the “knowledge city”, media-clusters, moves to host international events and a strong focus on tourism, increased office space, shopping centres, and, not least, a new congress and concert hall. Cliché, that is, in comparison to a myriad of cities in the global north during the last decades. Even the title of a “world leading” environmentally friendly city with “world famous” architecture can be seen as a standard element of the post-industrial discourse. But Malmö is *exceptional* in terms of scope, size and extensity. This city with only 300 000 inhabitants somehow managed to ‘get on the international map’, not least in terms of environmental issues and through hosting large events. The metamorphosis has been radical and drastic in scope and pace, but conventional in content. But this post-industrial winner has also gained vast attention for poverty, segregation and social unrest. Today Malmö contains this paradoxical position of receiving

international recognition for its more well-off areas such as the Western Harbour (receiving about ten to twelve thousand professional visitors every year to see its planning and architecture) but also for the city district of Rosengård – infamous (rightly or not) for its riots and social conflicts.

New economic conditions demand new urban structures. As capitalism is an evolutionary process, the spaces required for production and circulation are constantly transformed. Capitalism must perpetually produce landscapes in its own image, and requisite to its own needs – only to undermine, disrupt and destroy this landscape at a later point in time (Harvey 1985b, Lefebvre 1991). As time proceeds and buildings are built and demolished, roads are altered and vacant buildings are given new life or left to rot, other aspects remain more stable. The underlying structure of capitalism – with its constant need for growth, new technology and competition, acts as one such aspect (Harvey 1999). That is, the underlying reason for economic crisis remains seemingly stable – amidst the instability it causes.

The international economic landscape that made possible Malmö’s metamorphosis into a post-industrial city proved to be crisis-prone: it featured lower profit rates in manufacturing than during the post-war boom (but still booming profits for the financial sectors), the lowering of wages (in many places) and the chronic addiction to credit and mortgages (in most places). The crisis of 2008 seriously questioned this economic landscape. The massive effects the 1970s crisis had on western cities is plain for everyone to see. Only the future will tell how the current crisis will play out in the post-industrial city, but we can start by scrutinizing the nature of the current crisis and its relation to the city. Oosterlynck and González (2013) have called for sustained empirical analysis of the current crisis, as a laboratory for urban rationalities. This thesis heeds that call.

The research project, research questions and outline of thesis

The **general aim** of this thesis is to:

*understand the dialectics between urban planning and policy on the one hand and on the other economic change and crises in the city of Malmö in general and its city district of Western Harbour in particular.*²

2 For discussions on my usage of “planning and policy”, “change and crisis” and the “post-industrial city”, see chapter 3. On relations between Malmö and Western Harbour as fields of inquiry, see chapter 4.

Such an aim could be pursued along hundreds of different theoretical and methodological paths – thus it necessitates clarifications and delimitations. *Theoretically* the thesis builds on four (related) fields of inquiry: i) urban theory, ii) crisis theory, iii) planning and state theory and iv) dialectics. The specific theories and methodologies of the papers that make up this thesis are discussed below, but some initial indications may be helpful.

Urban theory in this thesis covers both classic takes on the city within critical geography (following Harvey, Lefebvre and others) as well as more recent analyses of the current crisis and the city. In terms of *crisis theory* I mainly refer to Marx and Marxists like Clarke, Harvey, Shaikh, Kliman and others, but also to Schumpeter(ians) and Keynes(isans) like Elliott, Krugman and others (this is mostly discussed in papers 2 and 6, as well in chapter 3 below). With respect to *planning and state theory* I derive inspiration from state theory, in particular Poulantzas, Jessop and Lefebvre, in order to make claims on urban planning. I discuss planning theory explicitly in paper 5, and discussions on planning and state theory are also further elaborated in chapter 3. The fourth field of inquiry, *dialectics*, functions as both a theoretical and a methodological basis for the thesis: a common thread that weaves throughout the dissertation. The main sources of inspiration are Ollman and Harvey, amongst others. Dialectics is briefly discussed in papers 1, 2 and 5 – but is more coherently elaborated in chapter 3 below.

In terms of *methods* and *methodology*, the thesis is primarily based on interviews, secondary data and written material (in particular document sources). This will be discussed in chapter 4, and I have also included a discussion on existing academic literature on Malmö in chapter 2.

Following from the *general aim*, I also articulate two more specific research questions:

- + *With what urban policies did Malmö respond to the 2008 economic crisis and to the earlier “industrial” crisis?*

- + *What characterises Malmö’s transformation from an industrial to a post-industrial city and which strategies have been used?*

Papers 1 and 2 engage with the first question, while papers 3 and 4 relate to the second [see Figure 1 below]. Paper 1 responds directly to the first question concerning the 2008 crisis, and paper 2 links this to the so-called “industrial crisis”. Paper 3 responds to the second question by investigating one of the strategies that was used from the mid-1990s onwards to get Malmö out of its industrial crisis: i.e. the strategies labelled “ecological sustainable” or “environmental”. Paper 4 looks at one very crucial characteristic of the transformation, namely how *class* relates to the planning process.

Figure 1 – Investigations of the crisis-city dialectics in the four empirical based papers.

Papers	Research questions	Operationalization	Approximately temporal focus
1 Urban responses to the economic crisis	1	Investigates the urban planning and policy that were mobilised as responses to the 2008 economic crisis	2008 – 2010 /2012
2. Crisis and the post-industrial city	1	Investigates the conclusion from paper 1 together with responses to the “industrial crisis” prior to the ‘work of vision’	1980s – 1994 and 2008 – 2013
3. ”Green fix” as crisis management	2	Investigates one of the strategies that Malmö mobilised: namely what we call the “green fix”	1994 – 2013
4. Beyond a liberal critique of “trickle down”: class and city planning in Malmö	2	Investigates <i>class relations</i> as a characteristic element of the urban transformation process	1994 – 2013

In order to answer these questions, I have conducted theoretical investigations that have materialised in two more theoretical papers. These papers respectively discuss whether urban planning can be seen as a “condensation of social relations” (Paper 5) and analyses how the current crisis is being discussed in (critical) human geography (Paper 6).

Outline of the whole thesis

This dissertation consists of five chapters and six academic papers. What such “compilation theses” within social sciences actually look like varies not only between universities, but also between departments at universities in Sweden (Lidström 2007, Lundahl 2010).

The five introductory chapters are organised as follows. This chapter provides a general introduction to the problem area, and describes the overall aim and research questions for the dissertation. The next chapter outlines some historical and geographical context: first by discussing what I call “the current crisis”, and then by discussing Malmö as field of inquiry, presenting a literature review of Malmö and problematising what has been called the “standard narrative” on Malmö’s transformation. The third chapter describes central theoretical and methodological points of departure, focusing on three *key concepts*: dialectics, planning and economy. The fourth chapter presents my methods and critically discusses sources and other considerations. I also make some reflections on knowledge production within the discipline of human geography and my role as a researcher. The fifth and final

chapter goes back to the research questions and summarizes the empirical findings while making some final reflections.

This mode of presentation also follows Lundahl's (2010) suggestion on what to include in the introductory chapters, with one exception: I deliberately aim to avoiding repetition from the six papers. Although some repetitions necessarily occur, I have excluded some major topics as I consider them adequately covered in the papers. This applies in particular for the general history of Malmö (which is presented in the more empirically based papers), and how I grasp planning as a condensation of social relations along with my take on Marxist crisis theory (which are presented in the two more theoretical papers). Most of the research overview is also left for the various papers.

Before proceeding to the next chapter, I will present an extended summary of the six papers, highlight the linkages between them and explain the main findings.

Overview and linkages between the papers

The first paper (*Urban responses to the economic crisis: Confirmation of urban policies as crisis management in Malmö*) investigates the dialectics between urban planning/policy and economic changes in the current crisis. It starts with the "common knowledge" that crisis also signifies opportunity and opens spaces for change – and shows through empirical study how this was not the case in Malmö in 2008-2010. The main finding is that Malmö did not respond to the crisis by exploring new opportunities and seeking changes and transformations; rather, the city responded actively to the crisis by confirming existing visions and tendencies in urban policy. The paper has a strong focus on, but is not confined to, the city district of Western Harbour. The dialectics between crisis, municipal planning and real estate capital is investigated based on interviews with planners and other public officers, real estate developers and other stakeholders, as well as different written material. Based on this investigation, the paper also proposes an argument developed further in paper 5 – that planning should be conceptualised as a condensation of social relations. This implies an understanding of urban planning and crisis management beyond the traditional formulations that oppose market (neoliberal) and state intervention (Keynesianism). Rather, reasons for why Malmö met the crisis with confirmation of existing urban policies are related to dominating *social relations* – to the fact that the current dominating social relations are the same as those underlying the transformation into a post-industrial Malmö. The paper additionally highlights (i) that although some social relations stayed the same, intra-class relations among developers were transformed during the crisis, and (ii) that crisis management in Malmö during the 2008 crisis was a fairly pragmatic process.

Paper 2 (*Crisis and the post-industrial city. Or: Is Malmö building yesterday's city tomorrow, again?*) starts where paper 1 ends. It explores the dialectics between urban planning/policy and economic changes by comparing how Malmö responded to the current crisis (cf. the conclusion of paper 1) with its response to its “industrial crisis” of the 1970s and 1980s. In terms of urban policy, the so-called industrial crisis was met in Malmö with more industrial policies, and I agree with those suggesting that this exacerbated the problems and contributed to the severe situation in early 1990s. Malmö thereafter inverted its strategy and embraced the “post-industrial city”. Although the current crisis does not seem to have fully disappeared and the current economic situation remains “uncertain”, the official rhetoric in Malmö is highly optimistic and the city continues the post-industrial project with full force. Building upon this, I examine in greater depth some of the major construction projects that are briefly mentioned in paper 1, like the new shopping centres, congress centres and hotels. Various secondary sources are explored in order to look at parallels between how the industrial and the post-industrial crises were managed. In both cases, i) the city aimed at *building* itself out of the crisis, ii) the policy has generally been *more of the same*, iii) the *state* and *municipality* were very central, and iv) there were *alliances* and *documented friendships* between leading social democrats and major developers and construction firms. One reason for this, I argue, lies in the political-economic relations at play, i.e. the class interests and relations, the political-economic relations and their ideological underpinnings. But I also argue that more precise articulation of these relations must be left for future research – which is where paper 4 starts. Theoretically, this paper draws upon *Marxian*, *Schumpeterian* and *Keynesian* positions and discusses how these can contribute different takes on the crisis-city dialectics. The paper concludes that there is little evidence of any thorough rethinking of hegemonic urban policy. Seen against Malmö’s managing of the industrial crisis, (the Keynesian approach of) building more of the same is not necessarily a good idea – if one is building the wrong things.

Paper 3 (*“Green fix” as crisis management. Or: In which world is Malmö the world’s greenest city?*) is co-authored with Andreas Malm and investigates the dialectics between urban planning/policy and economic changes in the transformation of Malmö into a “post-industrial” city. Specifically, the paper focuses on the “green” aspects of this transformation, which today manifests as the most internationally recognised component of “post-industrial” Malmö.

When Malmö in the mid-1990s established its “work of vision” as a policy tool to get out of its crisis, more or less anything was seen as a viable option – as long as it was “not-industrial”. We argue that the post-industrial sectors (e.g. culture, events, tourism, real estate, finance, etc.) have gained dominance in Malmö through a very pragmatic and still on-going process. Something “green” also emerged within this framework. We argue that Malmö has responded to the economic and ecological crises with a particular strategy we call the *green fix*. This concept builds on Harvey’s

spatial fix – a description of how capital relocates or reproduces space in the aim of resolving sluggish capitalist accumulation. The *green fix* is also a version of ecological modernism, but where sustainability also serves as a means to growth. The *green fix* in Malmö started as a subordinate discourse, but fuelled by its own success and state subsidies, the policy pragmatically moved to centre stage. The paper focuses on the city-district of Western Harbour, once the home of a world-leading shipyard, and now the no less prominent neighbourhood of ecological virtues. The paper is primarily based on interviews with politicians, public managers, planners, real estate investors, developers, researchers and people working on relevant issues at Sustainable Business Hub and Swedish Trade, as well as document analysis, newspaper articles and other written sources. From this we argue that the *international recognition* that Malmö has received is a very important aspect of Malmö's green fix. For developers the green fix is primarily a *business strategy*, and we see how the "green urbanism" is currently designed and packed with the aim of selling it as an export commodity. We also propose a twofold critique of the green fix in Malmö. First, it contains elements of "greenwashing" and second, it conceals crucial factors of scale and hence runs the risk of myopia.

Paper 4 (*Beyond a liberal critique of "trickle down": class and city planning in Malmö*) is co-authored with Guy Baeten. Where paper 3 focuses on a specific strategy in the process of making Malmö a post-industrial city, this paper takes a broad view by examining *class* as a highly important social relation that constitutes the process. We criticise the widespread idea that Malmö's transformation was a success with only one task remaining: achieving so-called "social sustainability". The paper claims that the post-industrialisation of Malmö was not a value-free process that happened to produce a polarization in terms of class "by chance". Class relations should instead be seen as inscribed into the very transformation process of the city. Inspired by Marx, we argue that *distribution* of wealth and power happens in the *production* process, and taken into an urban setting we argue that the intensification of class differences that has occurred in Malmö is not only due to problems with wealth distribution – but must be grasped together with the very production process of the city. In the absence of a much hoped for *trickle down* effect from high-end development projects, and in the face of intensifying social problems and polarizing income levels, the city (ruled by Social Democrats since 1994) has aimed to distribute wealth through a successive set of programs and policies: for example Welfare for Everyone, then the Area Program, and recently the Commission for Social Sustainability. The paper concludes by suggesting two reforms or changes in urban policy that would hopefully contribute to something more than firefighting in the polarised city. These are i) replace urban competition with urban cooperation to stop the downward spiral where cities compete in *not* attracting certain people, in lowering taxes and in being "business friendly"; ii) start planning for those actually living in the city, rather than basing urban policy on attracting some "educated others".

Paper 5 (*Spatial planning as condensation of social relations: A dialectical approach*) presents my theoretical take on planning. My first endeavour towards this idea can be found in an earlier text (Holgerson 2007, not included here), while paper 1 testifies how I developed this framework through working with empirical material. In paper 5 I argue for a thorough investigation of the dialectics between planning and extra-planning processes, and I formulate five theses: i) planning is a place constituted by conflicts; ii) planning is never a neutral place; iii) planning contains neither a “dark” nor a “bright” side; iv) planning is changing and being changed by the world; and v) political alliances should be made between planners and non-planners who want the world to change in similar directions. A related conclusion is that *more* planning (cf. Giddens, 2011) or any overemphasis on *how* to plan (e.g. Amdam and Amdam 2000) is less important than *what* is planned, i.e. for/with whom it is planned. I came to these conclusions via Nicos Poulantzas’ (1976, 2000) take on the state. Inspired by this I argue that planning should neither be seen as autonomous (subject) nor merely as an expression of something else (thing) – nor any combination of these two. In order to transcend this dualism I utilize dialectics, as derived from Ollman and others, and argue that planning should be conceptualised as a *condensation of social relations*.

Paper 6 (*Marxist crisis theory, human geography and the post-industrial city*), deals with crisis theory – particularly in relation to the discipline of human geography (and also urban studies). The paper follows Bellofiore (2011) and Basu and Vasudevan (2013) that there are two dominant positions within Marxian crisis theory, i.e. *realisation/overproduction* and *Law of the Tendential Fall in the Rate of Profit*. I claim that although crisis *theory* is little discussed within human geography – when it is, it tends to assume a realisation/overproduction approach (mainly through the work of David Harvey). The paper argues that both approaches are useful in understanding the current crisis and the post-industrial city. In Marxist crisis theory, it is also imperative that crises are “solved” through destruction and devaluation of capital (value) – which differs from a Keynesian solution primarily focused on increasing effective demand. I argue that this approach to the crisis also can introduce new knowledge into the field of human geography, and possibly also on the “post-industrial city”.

The six papers all contribute to shed different lights on my aim, which is to grasp the dialectics between *urban planning and policy* on the one hand and *economic change* on the other hand in *times of crises* in Malmö. But they are also held theoretically and methodologically together by the fact that they all have *dialectics* as common ground. This is discussed directly in some of the papers (see 1, 2, 5 and 6), and I present also a more coherent discussion on dialectics in chapter 3.

Chapter 2: The temporal and spatial context: the 2008 crisis and the city of Malmö

This chapter consist of two sections. In the first, I discuss the 2008 crisis, how it has evolved since 2008 and its impact on and relation to Sweden. In the second section I discuss Malmö, account for literature I have used, and discuss and problematise what and whose stories on Malmö's metamorphosis have become "standard narrative".

The 2008 crisis

In this economic recovery, however, homes have done much more than shelter people from wind and rain. They have helped to shelter the whole world economy from deep recession.

- Economist (28 March 2002)

The world economy [is] more stable than for a generation ... Our hugely sophisticated financial markets match funds with ideas better than ever before.

- Soon-to-be UK Prime Minister David Cameron at the London School of Economics, September 2007, quoted in Roberts (2013)

It has surely been an astonishing journey to follow the development of the crisis that first struck in the US in 2007. The following years have confirmed that crises assume different forms and appearances, and that they can be met by different policies. If one stable part exists within this story, it seems to be how surprisingly few academics changed their positions on crisis *theory*. Nonetheless, the crisis itself, and state policies

designed to tackle it, *have* been changing. What we know is that the crisis was certainly triggered by the bursting of a US housing bubble, and that this in turn related to increasing debt among US households. Furthermore, the severity of the crisis was dictated by the sheer volume of the bad mortgage debt, with big institutions experiencing heavy exposure to mortgage-debt defaults and serious subsequent cash-flow and solvency problems occurring in many financial institutions (and other entities) (Kliman, 2012). The crisis became worldwide as mortgages became “securitized” in the context of a (constructed) globally interlinked system of financial markets (Harvey, 2010a:20).

According to Corsetti (2012), the debate on fiscal policy has gone through two or three phases: The *first phase* came immediately after the crash and centred around a call to avoid another Great Depression by fiscal stimulus. Thoughts about future deficit corrections were seen as irrelevant or even counterproductive (ibid.). Many states intervened with fiscal stimuli and bank bailouts, in what Callinicos (2012:74) has called “the Keynesian episode of 2008-9”. Two things seem to be equally true about interventions during this period – they prevented a more severe depression, but they did not manage to generate sustained economic growth (McNally, 2011b).

Another aspect of the bailout developed as transfers of debt from private to public hands increased state expenditure and made high public debt loom large. Within the OECD countries, the gross debt increased from 92,5% of GDP in 2009 to 103% in 2011 (OECD 2012:13). Despite, or maybe because of the global economy’s lack of firm recovery, the debate on fiscal policy in 2010 moved into what Corsetti calls the *second phase*, with a focus shift to fiscal consolidation. The capitalist core entered the “age of austerity” (see Summers 2009, Peet 2011, Peck 2012). Not surprisingly, austerity measures have faced Marxist (Callinicos 2012) and Keynesian (Krugman 2012b) critique. But austerity also had strong defenders in IMF (2012) and OECD; according to the latter, there existed an “*increasingly growing consensus* for the necessity of restoring public finances as countries recognise that it is a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth” (2011:16, emphasis added; see also OECD 2012).

In 2012, Corsetti speculated whether a *third phase* might have begun: due to weak growth the “calls for austerity appear to have fallen out of fashion” (2012:2). However, nearly two years later austerity remains present in vast parts of the global north, and growth is, at best, still weak.

These shifts must be grasped in the dialectics between actual economic changes, interests, theory and knowledge. All this is fascinatingly revealed in the debate

surrounding debt-levels and austerity measures.³ Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff (2010) influentially claimed that when “gross external debt reaches 60% of GDP, annual growth declines by about two percent; for levels of external debt in excess of 90% of GDP, growth rates are roughly cut in half” (Reinhart and Rogoff 2010:573; see also Reinhart and Rogoff 2009). Reinhart and Rogoff gained widespread political support and were quoted directly by EU commissioner Olli Rehn, influential US Republican politician Paul Ryan and United Kingdom Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne's, among others (see Alexander 2013, Lyons 2013). However, through a famous replicate of the same data, Herndon, Ash and Pollin (2013:1) criticized Reinhart and Rogoff for “coding errors, selective exclusion of available data, and unconventional weighting of summary statistics”. They claimed, contrary to Reinhart and Rogoff, that average GDP growth does not differ dramatically when public debt/GDP ratios are over or under 90%. Properly calculated, the authors claim, the “average real GDP growth rate for countries carrying a public-debt-to-GDP ratio of over 90% is actually 2.2%, not – 0.1% as published in Reinhart and Rogoff” (Herndon et al. 2013:1). In a response in *New York Times*, Reinhart and Rogoff (2013) acknowledge the “calculation error”, but deny other accusations. The most interesting aspect is, nonetheless, that this “calculation error” – turning the initial argument around – has not yet led to the substantial *political* changes that one might have expected.

Predicting and explaining the crisis

Immediately after the crisis, it was not unusual to read claims that no economists could have seen the crisis coming, or that the financial system had become so complex that it was impossible to predict anything. And of course, *very many* economists and politicians did not expect any problems prior to the crisis, or understand much when the bubble burst. Alan Greenspan claimed, for example, that not a single major forecaster of note or institution could have predicted the financial crisis in 2007/2008 (see Wolfe 2013). Furthermore, a curious Queen Elizabeth II confronted the economists at the London School of Economics in November 2008 to question how they could have missed the impending crisis (Harvey 2010a). The economists had no satisfying answers.

Although (most) economists working within the current hegemonic paradigm could not predict the crisis, several financiers, heterodox economists and academics actually did. Obviously hedge fund manager and investor John Paulson did, making \$15

3 For a fascinating study on the relation between economic theory and the “actual existing economy” in terms of the geography of financialisation, see Christopher (2013).

billion in 2007 by betting against the housing market, and more billions the following year (Zuckerman 2009). Carlota Perez (2009) also points out that prominent and world famous economists like George Soros, Warren Buffet, Robert Shiller and Nouriel Roubini, as well as the Chief Economist of Morgan Stanley, Stephen Roach, all foretold the crisis.

Within Marxist circles numerous authors also claimed the crisis would come. John Bellamy Foster and Fred Magdoff (2009) and Michael Roberts (2009) published books quickly after the crisis struck with articles from previous years verifying how they had predicted the fall. Michael Stone (n.d) claimed after the crisis that he predicted the collapse in the housing market 30 years previously (see Stone 1975)! Perhaps so, but if one constantly claims there will be a crisis, one will also inevitably be right.⁴

“The current crisis”

The crisis has revealed all kinds of geographical differences. My analysis concerns *some* of these. In this dissertation I often use the vague and general concept “current crisis” as a collective term for all those slumps and crises that we have witnessed since 2008 – and those that remain with us. Kickert (2012) divides the current crisis into three parts: (i) the global financial crisis of 2008 – leading to state debt after public investment, (ii) the subsequent economic crisis of 2009 – leading governments to take recovery measures, which due to increasing debts and budget deficits led to (iii) the 2010 financial crisis.

Despite the changes that have occurred since 2007/2008, I still find it useful to mobilise the term “current crisis” for two reasons. First, it effectively distinguishes the current situation from earlier major crises, especially that of the 1970s, which I also write about. Second, the concept brings together, on a high level of generality, the different slumps and geographical variations that have occurred; and this bringing together is legitimized as the crisis contains not only many separate but concurrent events, but also, as I argue in paper 6, expressions of underlying contradictions and tendencies within the capitalist economy.

I also use the term “2008 crisis” – even though it was first triggered in the US in 2007 and surely did not disappear in 2008. Nonetheless, this term serves well as 2008 represents the year when the crisis became global and the severity of the situation could no longer be underestimated.

4 Of the last 5 crises, according to a classic joke, Marxists have predicted 8. It is less funny, of course, that leading economists at London School of Economics were unable to talk about the crisis in 2008.

The current crisis – now

At the time of writing, around seven years have passed since the US housing bubble burst, and approximately six years have elapsed since the crisis spread to Europe and the rest of the world. Perhaps even more exceptional than the outbreak of the crisis itself has been the lack of any substantial economic recovery. Events in 2012 seem reminiscent of 2008; JP Morgan Chase in May 2012 revealed a surprise trading loss of at least \$2bn on “complex investments made by its traders” (BBC 2012), and reports from the US showed how banks once again were targeting poor people and offering loans and credit cards (Svd 2012). Harvey also claimed, in 2012, that there existed several signs that the housing crash of 2007-10 was about to be repeated (Harvey 2012b). Those who argued around 2010-12 that the crisis would be with us for some time (e.g. Foster and Magdoff 2009, Harvey 2010a, Duménil and Lévy 2011, McNally 2011a, b, Kliman 2012), are so far correct. The latest data on the overall economic trends in Europe shows a very slow recovery, if any recovery at all, with variations from month to month. According to the most recent purchasing managers indexes (PMIs) all key sectors of the world economy are expanding, even in Europe – though at a moderate pace (Roberts 2014).

When writing about the current crisis and Sweden in 2014 it is important to note that Sweden is neither in a severe depression nor governed by the rules of austerity as it has comparatively little need for so-called “fiscal consolidation” in order to reduce debt-to-GDP ratios or deficits (OECD 2011:22). In paper 1 I described how Sweden around 2010-11 was labelled a “winner” of the crisis and *Financial Times* ranked Anders Borg the best European finance minister – “the wizard behind one of Europe’s best-performing economies” (Financial Times 2011, see also Jones Lang Lasalle 2011, OECD 2012). Despite this, the GDP growth rate, cf. data from Eurostat, declined from 6.6% in 2010 to 3.7% in 2011, and the forecast for 2012 was only 1,1% (see paper 1). OECD projected in 2012 that “Sweden’s economic momentum will pick up as world trade regains strength from mid-2012” (OECD 2012:232). However, this never came to fruition, and 2012 saw only a 0.9% growth in Sweden, with estimations for 2013 and 2014 at 1.1% and 2,8% (Eurostat, 2014). International numbers were even worse: Europe (28 countries) had a growth rate of -0,4% in 2012, and estimated growth of 0.0% in 2013 and 1.4% in 2014 (ibid.). The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, summarizes different economic indicators and argues that the Swedish economy will likely gain momentum in 2014 – after some tough years (Boverket 2013). But, the same report adds, “international uncertainty” may put a spoke in the wheel (2013:2). The report also claims that although the mood in the construction business at the moment remains unoptimistic, an improved Swedish economy will also surely boost the construction sector.

I discuss the effect of the 2008 crisis on Malmö in paper 1 and 2, and will not examine it further here. However, Malmö has not distinguished itself remarkably in

its post-2008 economic “recovery”. Although it is not a booming city, a look at latest numbers fails to produce evidence that the city is especially bad-off either: from 2011 to 2012, industrial investments and the number of new companies declined slightly, while unemployment increased slightly; but guest nights at hotels and hostels are on the rise, the number of bankruptcies slightly declining and total turnover shows a marginal increase (Malmö 2013a). However, a broader picture comparing housing prices with Sweden’s other two large cities over the last six years reveals that Malmö lags behind: Stockholm and Gothenburg have experienced 15 and 25% increases, respectively, in real-value prices for tenant owned apartment (*bostadsrätt*), whereas prices in Malmö have declined by 11% (Boverket 2013:1).

The fact that the crisis and crisis management (especially *austerity*) have played out differently in Sweden than elsewhere (in Europe and North America) presents some problems for my research, as I link Sweden to international discussions on the crisis. This also explains the different takes on the current crisis in the more empirically based papers (1 – 3) on Malmö and the more general, theoretical and internationally oriented paper 6. Still, Sweden’s growth rates remain unstable, and compared to southern Europe it could arguably be described as “not loosing”, rather than “winning”. In addition, the Swedish economy undeniably connects to the world in all kinds of ways, and weak growth and/or crises elsewhere will also affect Sweden and Malmö. And if the crisis turns out to have as massive an impact on western cities as the 1970s crisis had, Swedish cities will undoubtedly be affected as well.

When I started my PhD project in January 2010 the news brought daily information on the latest crisis-sparked event. Four years later it remains difficult, if not impossible, to predict even the near future. While the “official estimates” referred to above predict slow growth, but growth nonetheless, others see different scenarios in the crystal ball. Roberts claims, for example, that the economy will not reach bottom and really start recovering until 2018 (Roberts, 2009, 2013, see also paper 2). According to others, like the famous investor and author, Jim Rogers, the extensive printing of money (in US and elsewhere) will only lead to another bubble this year or in 2015, with the economy falling into bear market and sparking Armageddon for the world’s financial markets (Ekeseth 2014). It has been mostly fascinating, but also somewhat frustrating, to work with a subject matter that for four years has evolved as soon as I thought I had grasped it.

What's Malmö?

Malmö är en stad utan minne. Staden raderar sin historia, bit för bit, dag efter dag. Klassresa? Det är skrattretande.

- Kristian Lundberg (2012:137)

The quotation above in Swedish, from the local author Kristian Lundberg holds that Malmö is a city without memory: the city erases its history, bit by bit, day after day. And class-mobility? The thought is ridiculous. In *Malmö – Världens Svenskaste Stad* (Malmö – the World's most Swedish City), Per Svensson (2011) similarly argues that nothing ages as fast as the modern, and modernism is described as Swedish childhood faith with negligence of history as the Swedish original sin. Malmö is a city that constantly forgets and moves on create new myths, metaphors and stories. This, according to Svensson, is why Malmö is the world's most Swedish city (Svensson 2011:91).

I would argue that Malmö does not suffer from *negligence of history* in terms of hiding or forgetting its past. The municipality, for example, contributes a great deal to publishing all kinds of books on historical and contemporary issues (see below). It is more correct to say that the past always lingers as an image of the old, the out-dated, as "past". Aspirations for the new suppress all sentimentality of the old, and this combined with a strong and powerful political-economic leadership creates a mixture that makes the "changes" both fast and resolute. The destruction of inner-city areas in the 1960 and 1970 are particularly infamous in this respect (see Stigendal 1996). Rather than seeking explanations in vague concepts of *modernity* (cf. Svensson), I take my point of departure in actual political-economic relations and (class) interests (cf. Stigendal).

The transformation from industrial to post-industrial Malmö has been no less unsentimental than post-war demolishing of inner-city areas. For researchers of urban development, Malmö's transformation surely appears as a goldmine of all kinds of urban stories, patterns and structures that are of the greatest value for research. I will not reiterate here the general story of Malmö's transformation that is outlined in several of the papers. Instead, I will outline a review of (academic) literature on Malmö that has guided, helped and inspired me. This review is not complete, of course, and it contains a bias towards human geography and urban issues. There are a

great deal of reports, research, comments and even books that cannot be accounted for here. Due to the nature of a “compilation thesis”, the presentation of the municipal documents I have used becomes scattered. In order to produce transparency and an overview, I have included all municipal documents referred to in the six papers or kappa (as well as work published or commissioned by the municipality of Malmö) in Appendix A (see also chapter 4). Municipal documents will therefore not be discussed here.

Hopefully the literature review below will contribute to revealing how my research developed into its present form. After this review, I will add some comments on the Western Harbour that are perhaps not sufficiently clear in the papers, before ending this chapter with a discussion and problematisation of what (and whose) story about Malmö’s transformation has turned into the “standard narrative”.

Writings on Malmö

Several drawbacks exist to writing a collection of papers compared to a traditional monograph. One is the style of case presentation: the geographical-historical context and empirical facts about Malmö are deliberately chosen to suit the format and the arguments of each paper. Some things are therefore repeated while others downplayed. In this respect, my dissertation does not contain a comprehensive account of Malmö’s history. This history can already be found in the impressive PhD thesis by Peter Billing and Mikael Stigendal from 1994, which examines hegemonic social formations in Malmö in light of the “Swedish model” after the Second World War. Tove Dannestam (2009) has provided a more recent PhD thesis in the form of a monograph that has also proves very useful. Work conducted on Malmö over the last few years has been extensive – to say the least. Veselinka Möllerström (2011) in Media and Communications Studies Political Science and Dalia Mukhtar-Landgren (2012) in Political Science have published PhD-dissertations in the format of monographs. Guy Baeten (2012) has written about neoliberalisation and the Hyllie district, Stigendal (2007) on Fosie (and Malmö), Stefan Anderberg and Eric Clark (2012) on eco-branding in Malmö and the Øresund region and André Jansson (2005) on Media coverage of the housing exposition Bo01. Mattias Kärrholm (2008, 2011) has written on sustainable urban form, spatial scales, pedestrian precinct and shopping spaces, Ana Mafalda Madureira (2013) has investigated urban design and image-building through large-scale development, and Katarina Nylund (2014) has investigated conceptions of justice in Malmö’s comprehensive plans. An older but classic work on Malmö is Eric Clark’s (1988) historical-geographical study of rent gaps and urban transformations in Malmö.

Two edited books must also be mentioned, the first being Ove Sernhede and Tomas Johansson’s (2006) *Storstadens Omvandlingar: Postindustrialism, Globalisering och*

Migration — Göteborg och Malmö (Transformations of Large Cities: Post-Industrialization, Globalization and Migration — Gothenburg and Malmö). This book contains chapters on the industrial era (Sernhede and Johansson 2006), Bo01 as imagined and social space (Janson 2006) and struggles over space in Malmö (Thörn 2006). The other is *Lokal Makt* (Local Power), edited by Lars-Göran Stenelo and Bengt Norrving (1993), with chapters on local power relations in Malmö, including construction and city building (see also Jerneck 1993).

In economic geography, Karl-Johan Lundquist and Lars-Olof Olander (2007, 2009) have written extensively on Malmö and the surrounding region from a neoschumpeterian standpoint. Theoretically, Lundquist and Olander build much upon Lennart Schön (1996), whose text *Malmö, Från Kris till Tillväxt* (Malmö – from Crisis to Growth) deals with the crisis from an (Schumpeterian) economic point of view.

Hans Bagge (2007), Annika Nilsson (2003) and Nilsson together with Arne Elmroth (2005) have shown how the energy efficiency at Western Harbour has not achieved what was intended and planned for. Andreas Bergh and Martin Karlsson (2001) from the conservative think-tank *Timbro*, present a critical evaluation of the housing exhibition Bo01 from a *policy*-oriented view, while Christer Anderstig and Nilson (2005) produced a socio-economic evaluation of the housing exhibition (commissioned by the City of Malmö). The LIP-programme at Western Harbour, including Bo01, is also evaluated in *Sustainable City of Tomorrow Bo01 – Experiences of a Swedish Housing Exposition* (Persson Eds. 2005), published by the City of Malmö and funded by the Formas research council.

There also exists research on how Malmö is (being) polarised: Karin Hedin et al. (2012) present empirical analysis of gentrification and filtering between 1986 and 2001, and Stigendal (2011) writes about the duality in knowledge production in Malmö. Also Mukhtar-Landgren (2005, 2008), Holgersen (2012) and Salonen (2012) have investigated socio-economic polarization. Despite the fact that the general transformation process is normally referred to as a success, everybody who knows the city also knows its poverty and inequality. This part of Malmö, excluded from the city's growth strategy and employment policy, mainly receives attention in media when it comes to riots and social unrest. In one infamous visit, Fox News made some extraordinary connections between urban riots and Islam (FoxNews, 2004a, FoxNews, 2004b). There also exists critical research on the "lower part" of Malmö. Carina Listerborn (2007) wrote a critique on communicative planning processes among women in marginalised neighborhoods, especially the district of Rosengård. The most classic study of this "infamous" district is Per-Markku Ristilampi's (1994) *Rosengård och den Svarta Poesin – En Studie av Modern Annorlundahet* (Rosengård and the Black Poetry – A study of Modern Alterity), which also provides an interesting discussion on the history of planning (theory).

As previously stated, the above-mentioned literature is in no way exhaustive, but demonstrates nonetheless the variety and quality that exists concerning research on Malmö. I am delighted to add my four empirical papers to this list.

Some words on the Western Harbour

The Western Harbour consists of different sub-projects. Some of the larger ones include *Dockan* (developed by Peab, JM and Wihlborgs) in the west, *Varvstaden* (developed by Peab) in south, *Masthusen* (developed by Dlligentia) in the middle, and Bo01 (the site of the housing exhibition), Bo02 (often called Flaggskippet) and Bo03 (often called Fullriggaren) in north. Bo01, Bo02 and Bo03 have several developers and when planned the land was owned by the municipality. That the municipality pre-emptively bought this land for 240 million Swedish Kronor in 1996 is crucial. Without this, the Bo01 would most likely not have taken place at Western Harbour at all, but rather at the initially planned location at Ön in Limhamn – not at all as centrally located or with the same historical connotations in Malmö as Western Harbour. Placement of the exhibition at Ön would have created a very different dynamic in Malmö's post-industrial development. In terms of construction mistakes and other mistakes, one should also keep in mind that Bo01 was as a *housing exhibition*. It could also be added that although Western Harbour surely can be described as a *brownfield site*, the site was not as empty as it may come across in the empirical papers. The owner of Limhamns Industriservice, for example, had to move against his will (Sydsvenskan 2010). This is one of many aspects that surely could be investigated further.

Which story and whose stories?

The transformation of Malmö has been much discussed and the municipality has been very active in *how* to present the process. Mukhtar-Landgren argues that the leaders in the municipality not only have “reinvented” the municipality, but that they also have a strong ambition to “tell” about this process, with the “standard narrative” being that Malmö has risen like a phoenix from the ashes (Mukhtar-Landgren 2012:120-121, see also Dannestam 2009).

Mukhtar-Landgren argues that this “standard narrative” can be exemplified by a text from 2000 about Malmö in the 1990s, which was published by the municipality and written by Peter Billing (Billing 2000; for a discussion on source of criticism on this particular text, see chapter 4 below). Mukhtar-Landgren deconstructs the “standard” story into seven steps: (i) Malmö was one of Sweden's leading growth regions in the 1950s and 1960, but (ii) the economic crisis hit “unmercifully” in 1991 and problems deepened in light of, among other things, a series of closures. And, (iii) combined with

the increasing influx of refugees and asylum seekers, this led to employment rates falling drastically in the first half of the 1990s. In this situation of deep crisis, (iv) Mayor Reepalu (Social Democrat) and Deputy Mayor Percy Liedholm (from the liberal-conservative Moderaterna party) sat down in February 1995 and wrote a joint letter to the government, demanding that the national state take measures to prevent the municipality from suffering a “financial meltdown”. Concurrently (v) the municipal leaders started to see opportunities to alter the city, and in 1995 the “work of vision” was established and things began to change. After this followed (vi) the new fiscal equalization scheme (favoring Malmö), the Öresund Bridge to Copenhagen, the City Tunnel railway under the city, Malmö University and work on integration and the vision of the Öresund region. The text, published in 2000, ends with (vii) descriptions of Malmö as morphing into an “event city” or the “city of experience” (upplevelsestaden) and a knowledge city (see Mukhtar-Landgren 2012:ch 5.3.2, and Billing 2000).

Although one should not overemphasize the role of Billing, Mukhtar-Landgren provides a good summary of the “standard story” of Malmö’s transformation to a post-industrial city. Today one can add Bo01, Turning Torso, Hyllie developments and Malmö Live to the list of “successes”. Also important is Billing’s concluding warning against even stronger social and ethnical segregation. This relates to a key aspect of the “standard narrative” as it is told in 2014: although many consider the transformation a huge success, there are still some problems concerning “social issues” – and these problems are (finally?) being dealt with now (see e.g. Guidoum 2010). Or, in the apt formulation of the Director of the Planning Office, “we have an amazing success story behind us, but now we need to formulate a new vision for Malmö and people living in Malmö. ... Social sustainability and the people living in Malmö will play an important role in this” (Malmö 2013b:3).

In the “standard narrative”, the housing exhibition Bo01, together with the rest of Western Harbour, is always lauded as a huge success. The introductory chapter of the municipality’s own evaluation of the Western Harbour ends with recognition of some contradictions and problems the exhibition faced, and yet the story ends well – when the municipality acts as the storyteller:

When the housing expo company went bust, with a clamour of media attention, on the closing day of the exposition in September 2001, the housing expo organisation vanished and with it the aspiration concerning the expo’s impact on developments. But the city district remained and that very same day began leading its real life as a dynamic and progressive part of Malmö’s urban community. (Persson and Dalman 2005:15)

I have not in this dissertation thoroughly engaged with all the local critique concerning the Bo01. According to a study, over 25% of 3,700 press clippings

collected between March 1999 and September 2001 had a negative attitude towards the project (Persson and Dalman 2005:7). The local critique concerned the choice of the polluted Western Harbour landfill as site for the housing exhibition, the strong municipal economic support for arranging the exhibition, pay disputes with the construction workers and strikes. During the exhibition, audience numbers were fewer than expected and the high cost of the exclusive homes being built led to questions about who could actually afford to live there. After Bo01 the Housing Expo Company went bankrupt, and the houses did not prove to be as energy efficient as expected. Turning Torso, opening in 2005, proved to be an equal economic failure (Persson and Dalman 2005, Jansson 2006, Dannestam 2008). According to Jansson (2006) few housing exhibitions or new city districts have become so infamous.

But the atmosphere changed somewhat during the first years of the new decade, mostly due to the fact that Western Harbour, unexpectedly, became a hugely popular place for summer swimming and recreation. As Malmö garnered an international reputation as a post-industrial success-story, the schizophrenic Malmö I describe in paper 4 developed: a city internationally (in) famous and known for its flag ship developments in Western Harbour as well as for its poverty, slums and social unrest.⁵ However, despite the amount of critical research and frequent “horror” stories in the news (see also Baeten 2004) on poverty and social unrest, the majority of stories on urban development arguably focus on the city’s more well off areas. This is not only true for the municipality itself, and for academics (discussed above), but often also for journalists.⁶ In this sense, my dissertation follows the dominant pattern of holding Western Harbour as its point of departure.

The “standard narrative” very much presents Mayor Ilmar Reepalu as the “strong man” taking over in times of crisis and solely steering the ship out of the tempest. The “standard narrative” pays less attention to the fact that Malmö transformed late compared to its deprived industrial city-peers, and seems also to favour political changes within Malmö (and to a lesser degree within Sweden or the Öresund Region) over international economic trends. Furthermore, the conservative government prior to the social democrats reclamation of power in 1994 also initiated small steps towards the post-industrial city (interview Stefan Lindhe, politician, Conservatives).⁷

5 For two “clichés” of the international coverage, see the extreme differences between BBC Worldwide’s (2013) news report from the ecological heaven Western Harbour, and Fox News’ (2004a) racist report from the “gates of hell”: Rosengård.

6 See Paul Frigyes (2011) critique of Per Svenssons’ book on Malmö.

7 According to Billing: when the Social Democrats were selling municipal property and conducting privatizations in the 1990’s, it was through consensus between the two major political blocks. When it was the Conservatives who conducted privatizations, it sparked resistance (for political and strategic reasons) from the Social Democrats (Billing 2000). The general transformative processes of Malmö

Another constantly under-communicated aspect worth mentioning is the story of the Saab's car factory (cf. paper 2). For example, in a massive 400+ page book on history of *Malmö Businesses*, the entire history of the Saab factory falls into only nine lines (Smitt 2007:75, but see Malmö 2012a).⁸ Jansson (2005) describes the factory correctly as nothing but a historical parenthesis – but this is “correct” only in the sense that historical writing is a field of selection, as well as rife with political and strategic considerations: the car factory has been *made* into a parenthesis. In this dissertation the factory plays a different role.

This dissertation enters into a (critical) dialogue with the existing literature as well as with the “standard story”. I do not aim to judge whether Malmö's transformation should be considered a success or not - but rather to broaden the general understanding of subject matter in order to better promote positive changes in the future. By using the Western Harbour as point of departure, and also through interviewing many main actors, and letting their voices be heard, I am also in danger of repeating much of the standard story. Yet by highlighting parts of Malmö's story that do not fit so neatly into the ‘standard narrative’ (for example the Saab factory history) and also stressing social relations like class, I also think I at least somewhat succeed at problematising what/whose story tends to be told. Thus, I nuance the standard discussion through this dissertation in five ways: I i) link together the two “worlds” (the social and the economic) of planning (pace Billing 2000), and ii) also show that this tightly relates to class relations (see paper 4). Further, this dissertation iii) provides a (critical) investigation of the “environmental” part of the city's transformations process (see paper 3), while iv) situating the transformation within a critical understanding of crisis theories (see paper 2). Finally, the study v) stresses the *dialectics* between urban politics and economic changes as a crucial methodology in understanding the transformation, rather than solely focussing on one aspect.⁹

have since 1994 been fairly consensus based (for disputes on Värfärd för alla, see Mukhtar-Landgren 2012), but this raises the questions whether the consensus would have been there if it was initiated by the Conservatives / Liberals.

- 8 The current developer of the site, Diligentia, is however communicating the history of the car factory (Diligentia 2010).
- 9 This interaction, I would argue, is a position that planners (and politicians) are normally very aware of, and e.g. Reepalu reflected interestingly on such issues in my interview with him. As academics are working within their disciplines, they tend to emphasise the one (e.g. economic, see Schön 1996) or the other (e.g. “political-driven process”, see Mukhtar-Landgren 2005, 2012). The analyses, in my opinion, that best highlight the political-economic dialectic are conducted by Billing and Stigendal (1994, Stigendal 1996).

Chapter 3: Economy, Planning and Dialectics as key words. Reflections on theory.

This dissertation centres on the dialectics between economic change and crisis on the one hand, and planning and policy on the other, with the main theoretical framework to a large degree derived from Marx and Marxists. This unfolds as an intricate task, considering that Marx said nothing about planning; Marxists have disputed for over a century what Marx *really* theorized about crises; and Marx was never clear on the state and hardly wrote anything explicitly on dialectics (Clarke 1994; Ollman 2003; Brenner and Elden 2009b; Harvey 2010b; Hobsbawm 2012). This obviously calls for clarifications, and in this chapter I will try to provide some by elaborating in three parts how I understand the three key concepts *dialectics*, *planning* and *economy*. In the first part I will discuss the role of *dialectics*, which I consider to be a common thread throughout the dissertation. I will discuss how dialectics relates to ontology, epistemology and methodology, and how the concepts of “abstractions” and “the philosophy of internal relations”, borrowed from Bertell Ollman, can provide guidance in this respect. I also discuss some critique of Ollman’s notion of dialectics, and how dialectics relate to materialism. In the second part I discuss *urban planning* and *policy*. I argue that the post-industrial city, just as the capitalist economy as a whole, is dependent on planning, and I argue that planning could be conceptualised as the *condensation of social relations*. In the third and last part I discuss the notions of *economy* and, particularly, *economic crisis*. I first address implications of having a Marxist point of reference on *value* (the distinction between productive and unproductive labour) and *class*. I then discuss *spatio-temporal* aspects of crisis, before ending the chapter with a discussion of Marxist economics in relation to what I call its *sparrring partners*: Schumpeterian and Keynesian theory. Through the chapter I also aim to show how I utilized these concepts and theories in my various papers.

Dialectics

Everything changes and nothing remains still [...] you cannot step twice into the same stream

– Heraclitus

The danger always exists that dissertations built on separate papers turn out to be fragmented with disintegrated arguments. Hopefully, my usage of dialectics in the papers – explicit in papers 3, 4 and 5, and implicit in the others – as a way of thinking and as a form of presentation will contribute to holding the papers together, in the same way a rug might really tie a room together. My understanding of dialectics stems in great part from Bertell Ollman, who first presented his notion of dialectics in *Alienation – Marx’s Concept of Man in the Capitalist Society* from 1971. Within human geography this quickly influenced Harvey (1973), as well as Gunnar Olsson and others. According to Harvey (1996), the craft of dialectical thinking in geography is not well understood. Sheppard argues that work on dialectics within geography since 1989, when the ISI database became relevant in this respect, has occurred at a low but steady frequency: “dialectics has remained a drum-beat underlying radical and critical human geography” (Sheppard 2008:2603, see also Merrifield 1993, Castree 1996, Peet 1998).¹⁰

There are various understandings of what dialectics implies, even *within* Marxism. For example, Ollman’s reading of Marx’ dialectics is somewhat closer to Hegel than Althusser’s reading (2005), with the latter arguably aiming to eradicate Hegel’s influence on Marxism altogether.¹¹ The so-called “Analytical Marxists” take it one step further and want to abandon not only Hegel, but dialectics altogether (see also Castree 1996, Callinicos 2005, Ollman and Smith 2008, Wan 2012).

Dialectics is often conceived as the dyadic model, (rightly or wrongly) associated with Hegel, of thesis-antithesis-synthesis – always leading to resolution. Ollman strongly

10 Sheppard argues that most discussions on dialectics within radical geography before 1989 took place in fora beyond ISI, such as “Antipode (between 1969 and its commercialization in 1986), the Union of Socialist Geographers Newsletter of the 1970s and 1980s, or various radical geography conferences” (2008:2603).

11 I cannot go into the broader Marx-Hegel debate here, but in relation to dialectics within geography, see Castree 1996, Peet 1998 and Sheppard 2008. (Outside the discipline, see e.g. Lukács 1971, Ollman 2003, Callinicos 2005, and Wan 2012.)

rejects this “rock-ribbed triad [...] that serves as an all-purpose explanation” (Ollman 2003:12, see also Lefebvre 1976:14). Rather than clear definitions or an ABC-recipe, Ollman argues for a take on dialectics that manifests more as “guidelines” or a “way of thinking” in which the emphasis rests on the “flow and flux” and the main subject is change: “all change, and interaction, all kinds and degrees of interaction” (Ollman, 1990:27, see also Harvey 1996). Ollman argues that rather than investigating *why* things change, the question should be “*how, when and into what* do they change and why do they sometimes appear not to (ideology)” (Ollman 2003:66).¹²

Dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the commonsense notion of “thing” (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notions of “process” (which contains its history and possible futures) and “relation” (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations). (Ollman 2003:13)

Below, I will discuss the ontological and epistemological foundation for Ollman’s dialectics:¹³ i.e. the philosophy of *internal relations* (ontology), which claims that everything connects to everything else and no boundaries exist between things, processes or structures in reality.¹⁴ However, in order to think and talk about the world (epistemology), we need to draw boundaries and establish units – and that is what Ollman refers to as *abstraction*.

Dialectics and internal relations

The philosophy of internal relations claims that all things, factors, structures etc., relate to everything else, and that all conjunctions could properly be called *inneractions* rather than *interactions*. This also means that when an important relation alters, the factors themselves also alter and become something else. All factors and processes are not only internally related to every other factor and process – but also to their own past and future form. Space and time are in this respect neither absolute

12 Here “ideology” connotes something apparently not changing. Lefebvre proposes the opposite, interestingly enough: “Fetishism and ideology of change (in other words, the ideology of modernity) conceal the stagnation of essential relations” (Lefebvre 1996:177).

13 For a critique of stressing too much the distinction between epistemology and ontology of dialectics, see Lukács 1971 and Harvey 1996.

14 For an example of external relations, it is worth mentioning Gough’s argument that Keynesian traditions normally treat the relations between workers, firms, local economies and the global economy as external. This is “because the units are regarded as fundamentally related through exchange in markets” (Gough 2003:27).

nor external processes – space and time do not “happen to things” – but are contingent and contained within them. But although all processes evolve together, and no process “comes first”, it also holds true that some processes have greater effect than others and vice versa. Indeed, Ollman argues that Marx used the rather undialectical concepts of “cause” and “determine” to register this asymmetry (Ollman 2003:71).¹⁵ Various physical, biological and social processes have multiple spaces and times implicated in them – processes that produce their own forms of space and time: “[p]rocesses do not operate *in* but *actively construct* space and time and in so doing define distinctive scales for their development” (Harvey 1996:53, emphasis in original, see also Ollman 1973; Altvater and Hoffman 1990; Lefebvre 1991; Peet 1998).

Although the phrase “everything is related to everything” sounds like a platitude in many circumstances, it contains some fascinating geographical implications, both in terms of relative and relational space, the innerconnectedness of places and in terms of geographical scale (see Harvey 1973, 1996, Merrifield 1993, Gough 2003). Jamie Gough shows, for example, how social relations, like the capital-labour relations, operate at different spatial levels of the economy, and how they enable us to conceptualise the scalar links between “workplaces, industries and local and global economies as internal relations” (Gough 2003:28). Social relations work at different levels – but still relate internally. This implies something more than simply “applying” the capital-labour relation at different spatial levels.

Dialectics also has fascinating implications concerning *time*, as it links the present to both the past and the future. The future is imperfectly realised in the present (cf. Ollman and Smith 2008), and Guglielmo Carchedi claims that “reality has a double dimension, what has become realised and what is only potentially existing and might become realised at a future date” (2012:4). This implies that the notion of *change* becomes crucial, and that it becomes possible to argue that the post-industrial city existed as a potential within the industrial city.

But although everything changes all the time, it makes no sense to always think of our surroundings as possibly collapsing at any time. Marx and Engels famously proclaimed that “all that is solid melts into air” (2008:38), and yet capitalism – changed, transformed and transported – seems to remain intact (cf. Storper and Walker 1989). How can we understand this? There is surely no reason to believe that

15 Unfortunately (and somewhat problematically), many concepts we use, and are used to, are fairly non-dialectical. I argue, for example, that crises are endemic and lie permanently within the economic system – as if there is an “outside”. What is meant here is simply that crises are strongly related to tendencies that could fruitfully be defined as the economy as such. I also use concepts like “extra-economic” factors – not to make it into an externality, but to mark the abstracted boundary.

the Swedish state will “melt into air” any day soon. Things change at different paces, processes produce different times, and sometimes stability might even appear as the essence of things. Grasping the “correct” pace of change becomes a difficult if not impossible task. Ollman claims there exists a tendency among dialectical thinkers to overestimate the speed of change, as well as underestimate everything that holds change back: the fact that “relative stability” does not always get the consideration it deserves is, according to Ollman, a weakness “inherent in the very strengths of dialectical method” (2003:19). If one underestimates the relative stability that exists, it becomes hard to “accomplish anything or even set one’s mind to do anything” (Harvey 1996:7). Phenomena we label as “things”, “moments”, “events”, and “elements” must be given careful attention, and conceptualised as constituted by the relations and processes that again constitutes the whole (Harvey 1996). Borrowing from Alfred North Whitehead, Harvey warns against downplaying the surrounding “permanences”: seemingly fixed objects coalesce from a world of constantly shifting relations (see also Sheppard 2006).¹⁶

I find the underlying ontological question tricky: can reality actually be identified with “flows and fluxes”? For Ollman (2003), Merrifield (1993) and Harvey (1996) this is the case. The next question then becomes whether this applies only to human relations or also to extra-human relations? Should we, in other words, use only Marx’ *Capital* or also Engels’ *Dialectics of Nature* (Ollman and Smith 2008)? According to Harvey, the *least* that can be said is that “there is as much evidence for the argument that processes constitutes things and systems in the natural and social world as there is evidence for any alternative proposition” (1996:58). Concerning human relations and dialectics I agree – I do not see valid reasons to believe anything else. Concerning purely extra-human relations, I am, to be frank, somewhat slightly less convinced and less concerned. Is the mountain really dialectical? Well, I will definitely not advocate any other view on the matter.¹⁷ But for this dissertation, it should be sufficient to stress the dialectics of social relations as an ontological position.

16 Harvey has also been criticized for being more comfortable with ”permanence” than with ”change”, see Katz 2006:224.

17 My giving priority to human relations is also the reason why I am less concerned with Friedrich Engels’ work on dialectics, or Levins and Lewontin’s *Dialectical Biologist*.

Dialectics and abstractions

We both step and do not step in the same rivers. We are and we are not.

– Heraclitus

If everything relates to everything else and constantly changes with no fixed or *a priori* boundaries, how can we possibly say anything about anything? We are simply forced to *make* boundaries. The activity of setting boundaries and conceptual distinctions in respect to space, scale, environment and time is to erect social and mental constructs imbued with political and strategic considerations (Ollman 2003). While investigating something, we are simply forced to “pretend” that other things do not currently move or change (Harvey 1973, 1996). This concerns both epistemology and methodology: how we “organise and present” a reality (methodology) relates to what kind of knowledge we can draw from it, and how (epistemology) (see Castree 1996; Peet 1998). In terms of organizing a reality with the goal of knowledge extraction, Ollman suggests three modes of abstractions.

The first is abstraction of *extension*. Here boundaries are set both spatially and temporally. Spatially, we write about cities without references to other places – acting like the rest of the world stands still and watches. Concerning abstraction of time, Ollman claims that serious distortion arises “from the tendency among political economists to abstract processes solely in terms of their end result” (2003:76); for example, the commodity-exchange substituting for the whole production process. I draw upon this in paper 4, problematising the distinction between production and distribution of the city. The second mode of abstraction is *levels of generality*. Ollman here proposes seven levels, exemplified by the engineer Joe Smith: i) Joe Smith (individual), ii) engineer, iii) capitalism, iv) class society, v) human society, vi) including animals, and vii) nature. The third mode of abstraction comes as *vantage points*; which are perspectives from where one can investigate reality, that “colors everything that falls into it, establishing order, hierarchy, and priorities, distributing values, meanings, and degrees of relevance, and asserting a distinctive coherence between the parts” (Ollman 2003:100).

With these three modes of abstraction, and their subcategories, we begin to explore how humans organise reality. We can also see how debates become problematic if participants operate on different levels of abstraction. (Ollman uses the example of Marx’s and *Law of the Tendency to Fall in the Rate of Profit* and the problems of evaluating it from different vantage points (Ollman 2003:109, cf. paper 6.) Within human geography, for example, a normal abstraction is that of the *geographical scale*. The central question is *not* which abstraction always holds true, but rather “which is

the appropriate abstraction for dealing with a particular set of problems” (Ollman, 2003:91). Nonetheless, “some internal relations are stronger and more formative than others” (Gough 2003:28), and social relations playing out at some level of generality or geographical scale can have more impact than others.¹⁸ Not all abstractions provide equally important information.

Critique of dialectics – and the introduction of materialism

Everything is what it is, and not another thing.

– G.E. Moore (quoted in Ollman 2003:69)

The take on dialectics described above and the philosophy of internal relations has been met with critique. David Wells (1981) argues, for instance, that although it can be easy to agree that “everything is related to everything”, some relations are so indirect that effectively they can be said to be external. Mario Bunge is slightly more radical, as he states: “not everything is tied to everything else” (quoted in Wan 2012:433). George Sorel goes further and claims that dialectics manifests as “the art of reconciling opposites through hocus pocus” (quoted in Ollman 2003:59). The founding father of Critical Realism, Roy Bhaskar (1993) argues that instead of the philosophy of internal relations, there exists in reality both internal *and* external relations as well as separate (though open-ended) “totalities” (see also Wan 2012, Sheppard 2008).¹⁹ Similarly, but coming from the post-structuralist camp, the geographer Marcus Doel (2006) criticises Harvey’s *historical-geographical materialism* for not having an *outside*. Critical realist Andrew Sayer likewise asks, if there is no outside, what exactly is the *whole*?²⁰

However, the burden of proof can be turned back on the critique: how are boundaries between internal and external relations established? Where is the boundary between inside and outside, and who places it? The philosophy of internal relations answers these questions by saying that everything is connected to everything and boundaries are set through abstractions. Sayer’s question on defining the whole is not a problem, I hold, as long as we deal with *social* relations and human activity.

18 This is also similar to Waldo Tobler’s so-called first law of geography: “everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things” (quoted in Sheppard 2008).

19 Ollman claims, however, that “some of [Bhaskar’s] theoretical practice suggest otherwise” (2003:177).

20 Personal communication, 30 May 2013.

Bhaskar also criticises Ollman for reducing dialectics to “a way of thinking” (Bhaskar 1993:201), and claims that Ollman’s dialectic operates primarily at an epistemological level. I only agree to some extent. Although Ollman’s main contribution perhaps centres on the process of *abstraction*, i.e. how we can gain knowledge (epistemology), he also makes strong ontological claims (“everything is related to everything”).

One danger with the philosophy of internal relations is to fall victim to the fallacy of going from the thesis that “the whole and particulars constitute each other” to claiming that “everything can be grasped through the particularity” (cf. Harvey 1996). But again: there are no *a priori* boundaries to constitute any particulars, and making abstractions becomes a matter of “major strategic considerations” (Harvey 1996:53).

I find dialectics a fruitful way to investigate the world without predetermined boundaries. However, for Marxists, making abstractions is by no means a matter of randomness. Our concepts of things and processes reflect back on actually existing things and processes; that is, of course, if we are not mistaken. Gough argues likewise that in the “Marxist as distinct from idealist and postmodern conceptions of internal relations, the individuation and naming of the parts of society is not arbitrary: processes and the social units they define are based on the material nature of human life and on the forms of consciousness that both reproduce and change these” (Gough 2003:28).

While Marx did not say much explicitly on dialectics, he is widely quoted as saying that his dialectical method not only differed from Hegel, but also exactly opposed him:

For Hegel, the process of thinking, which he even transforms into an independent subject, under the name of ‘the Idea’, is the creator of the real world, and the real world is only the external appearance of the idea. With me the reverse is true: the ideal is nothing but the material world reflected in the mind of man, and translated into forms of thought. (Marx 1976b:102)

Here, Marx turns Hegel’s idealism into materialism. According to Harvey, the historical, geographical and theoretical interrogation of material circumstances has crucial importance for understanding which of the internal differentiations that has primacy or significance (Harvey 1996:66). In this sense, “crisis”, “cities” and “class” are not just arbitrary terms for incidental things; rather, they are real existing phenomena that need to be grasped as well as possible.

I think it is fair to claim that such extra-discursive claims are (even) more stressed in the tradition of Critical Realism. Differently from dialectics, especially as derived from Ollman, Critical Realism is “mainly concerned with ontology” (Sayer 2000:32). Critical Realism stresses the existence of a reality beyond our knowledge of it,

distinguishes between the real, the actual and the empirical, and deals more in depth with ontology (Sayer 2000, see also Peet 1998, Graham 2005). In this respect, the school of Critical Realism points towards fields not as thoroughly discussed by Ollman. I do not see Critical Realism as necessarily inconsistent with dialectics based on the philosophy of internal relations.²¹ One needs to take a stand on whether all relations are internal or not. Nevertheless, stressing the existence of a reality beyond our knowledge of it does not exclude a philosophy of internal relations. It should be the opposite, and this is where I find dialectical materialism.

In summary, I find dialectics provide an advantageous framework in which to conduct research and write. My aim is to investigate the “dialectics between the city and crises”, but dialectics as such cannot *explain* the city or any given crises, neither is the aim to merge “city and crises” in any “synthesis”. Dialectics has helped me organise my thinking in at least four particular ways. First, as everything is inner-connected, one must be open to the idea that all kinds of processes and structures might – in principle – have effects on urban development in Malmö. Second, concepts like “city”, “planning”, “economy” and “real estate capital” are hence abstractions containing inherent contradictions themselves, which are constantly interacting with other processes and relations. Third, dialectics has forced me to think relationally;²² that is, to start with relations and processes as the point of departure, and to see (at least) two factors simultaneously. Although the focus has been on processes in Malmö, this also implies that it become impossible to overlook other scales in certain aspects (e.g. national policy in paper 3). Dialectics has also been fruitful to organise and present my thinking. All the papers thus end with some kind of comparison between different processes: urban policy and social (political-economic) relations (Paper 1), urban sustainability and urban crisis management (Paper 3), economic crisis (theory) and built environment (Paper 2), production of the city and class relations (Paper 4), urban planning and social relations (Paper 5), and between the current crisis and the post-industrial city (Paper 6). By “comparison”, it should be added, I do not mean “comparative studies” or by searching for a “synthesis”; but rather a strategy that takes the relational approach all

21 Ollman (2003) hints at a similar conclusion, and he gives the school of Critical Realism “enormous credit” for avoiding the dire fate of either positivism or postmodernism (Ollman 2003:173). I have elsewhere (Holgersen 2012) used Critical Discourse Analysis (which is based on Critical Realism) and dialectics (as derived from Ollman) jointly in a study on social classes and changes in urban development in Malmö.

22 My stress on “relations” related to the legacy within geography can be traced (at least) back to Harvey’s *Social Justice and the City* (1973). It must not be confused with the “relational turn” within geography approximately a decade ago, which according to Sheppard (2008) “had an unfortunate and untenable tendency to equate relational approaches with post-structuralism, but not with Marx” (2008:2608).

the way through the papers. Fourth and finally, through relational thinking and a dialectical mode of presentation I also problematise and sometimes transcend apparent contradictions: Keynesianism and neoliberalism in paper 1; planning as thing and subject in papers 1 and 5; production and distribution in paper 4; overproduction and LTFRP in paper 6; as well as the general state / capital distinction that winds through most of the papers.

(The need for) Planning

In everyday language, planning is often considered a process connected to socialist or social-democratic traditions (with “planned economy” connoting communism and dictatorship), while non-planning connotes the free market and capitalism. In reality, this is far from accurate. Through the papers I demonstrate how capitalism depends on all kinds of planning. This is nothing new: according to Hobsbawm (2012:8-9) the first theory of the “centralised socialist economy” was developed in 1908 by the non-socialist Enrico Barone, an Italian economist. The question of nationalizing private industries did not arise until the end of the First World War when it moved onto the agenda of practical politics. Even more interestingly, Marx said very little concretely about planning, and when planning was attempted after the revolution in Soviet Russia, “it had largely to be improvised” (Hobsbawm 2012:9).²³ Karl Polanyi argued in a similar though somewhat more emblematic vein: “Laissez-faire was planned; planning was not” (Polanyi 2001:147). Capitalism operates as a constantly evolving process with intense competition between firms. The anarchy within changing markets simply needs planning – all kinds of planning. It requires a state apparatus that ensures continuity of laws and security, and businesses themselves normally plan ahead. Land use must also be organised; it is crucial for infrastructure and movement, and also a business in itself.

This thesis explores urban planning and how we as dwellers and users of the cities create our urban formations. Despite Marxists comprehensive exploration of how planning and land use regulation facilitates capital accumulation (e.g. Harvey 1985),

²³ Hobsbawm writes: “A war economy remained the basic model of the Soviet planned economy, that is to say an economy where certain targets are fixed in advance – ultra-speedy industrialization, winning a war, making an atom-bomb or getting men on the moon – and the plans to achieve them by allocating resources whatever the short-term cost. There is nothing exclusively socialist about this” (2012:9).

any tradition we can call “Marxist planning” has not been so developed. Fainstein and Fainstein (1979) make the most out of this and argue:

Marxists’ theory and radical planning practice have lived uneasily with one another, in part because marxism cannot provide a completely satisfactory guide for what planner should do and still remain planner, and in part because seemingly radical planning activities have themselves been demystified by marxism. (1979:398)

Fainstein and Fainstein (1979), and even more so Hall (1996), argue that Marxist theory operates at such a high level of abstraction, and is so critical towards the state, that fruitful connections between planning and Marxist theory are impossible (see also Paden 2003). Certainly, Marxist theory lives uneasily with planning practice – but so do all planning theory: as the field of planning is generally troubled by the fact that it is both an academic discipline and an actual profession/activity. If Marxists theoreticians are too concerned problematising structures and underlying social relations, the opposite can be argued concerning most approaches in planning theory: stressing exhortation over explanation (Beauregard 2005, Flyvbjerg 1996). Much of Fainstein and Fainstein’s problem with Marxism also relate to difficulties in handling different levels of abstraction, and to the uneasy relation between “theory” and “practice”. These are also concerns that are valid outside Marxists discourses.

One problem Marxism does contain is the contradictory position of dreaming about one world and living in another. This means daily working and living in a political-economic system that one wants to change fundamentally. This rather frustrating position should be met through working for reforms that connect to larger ideas and programs (see short discussion on reform, reformism and revolution, below). Urban planning has a part to play in this.

This section on planning follows in three parts. Below I will i) discuss some background to my argument on planning in paper 5, then ii) I will outline my usage of the concepts “planning” and “policy” in this dissertation, and finally iii) elaborate on why I mobilise the concept “post-industrial city”.

Planning as social relations

In paper 5 I articulate my take on planning, and conclude that planning should be conceptualised as *condensation of social relations*. I would not be surprised if someone calls this a Marxist planning approach. If so, it must be said, I am less concerned with what Marx or even Marxists meant or said about planning. My aim has been to describe how I think urban planning actually functions. To perform this task, I found the takes that existed within the conventional “planning theory” insufficient, and often useless. Rather I have found useful inspiration in urban theory (especially

Lefebvre and Harvey) and (thanks to tips from Judith Allen at University of Westminster, in 2006) Marxist state theory from the 1970s onwards.

With respect to my inspiration from urban theory, I draw upon one of Lefebvre's (2009c) and Harvey's (1973) most fundamental claims: namely that *buildings* and *cities* contain, and are produced by, social relations. But they also acquire "phantom objectivities" (Lukács 1971) that come in all kinds of "fantastic forms" and thereby conceal their nature (Marx 1976a, Risebero 1992). The fantastic forms of skyscrapers, congress centres and 140-meter tall gantry cranes are materialisations of social relations. Social relations, just like our cities, constantly evolve, sometimes slowly and almost without notice, sometimes drastically and radically as in the context of economic crises. Again, what appears a relation between macroeconomic numbers and buildings of glass, stones and steel – actually manifests as relations between all kinds of human activity.

Arguably, contemporary planning theories are not able to deal with the complexity of modern capitalism. One of the reasons for this is that planning theory has always concerned itself more with what planners should do over what planners actually do (Beauregard 2005). Any guide for action must have existing (power) relations as a point of departure. I hence reject the idea of normativity and 'guide for action' as concepts that can be understood apart from the social relations at play.²⁴ I stress the need to investigate the dialectics between planning and extra-planning – between subject matter and all kinds of social relations in society. Lefebvre took this claim seriously, and understood that capitalism has always been in need of planning.

But what has happened is that capitalism has found itself able to attenuate (if not resolve) its internal contradictions for a century, and consequently, in the hundred years since the writing of *Capital* it has succeeded in achieving "growth". We cannot calculate at what price, but we do know the means: *by occupying space, by producing space*. (Lefebvre 1976:21, emphasis in original)

This quote from Lefebvre was first published in 1973 and has gained a canonical position within human geography. Despite the resonance, Harvey (2005) claims that Lefebvre failed, unfortunately, to explain how or why this was the case. Brenner and Elden (2009) argue that although this seems unclear, what does become clear is that the "*state* represents the link between the survival of capitalism and the production of space" (Brenner and Elden 2009:26, my emphasis).

24 "Even a history of religion that is written in abstraction from this materialist basis is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly kernel of the misty creations of religion than to do the opposite, i.e. to develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosized" (Marx, 1976a:493-494)

This brings us to the complicated terrain of the *state*. While acknowledging the state's inherent complexity, one must also stress contextual historicity and spatiality, as the state manifests as "the product of society at a certain stage of its development" (Lefebvre, 2009b:83). According to Jessop, there seems to be "no activity that states always perform and none that they have never performed" (2008:3). I draw on state theory in order to investigate spatial planning for two reasons; first, because of the legal and organizational relationships relevant within state theory, and second, to serve as an inspiration beyond existing frameworks within the discipline. State theory offers a new vista on planning, such as Poulantzas' conceptualization of the distinction between state as 'thing' and 'subject'.

My take on the state (in paper 5) is not as thorough as, for example, my exploration of crisis theory in paper 6, as the state acts not as the object of study *per se* – but instead facilitates the understanding of planning (granted, much planning *is* state activity). Hence, I do not engage with non-Marxist views on the state (see Jessop 2008). Rather my view of the state takes its point of departure in the (in)famous Miliband-Poulantzas dispute, where Laclau also played a part. Here Miliband argued that the state's capitalistic nature stemmed from the class identity of the people staffing the state, while Poulantzas argued it is because of social structures (Poulantzas, 1975, 1976, Miliband, 1970, 1973, Laclau, 1975, Aronowitz, 2002). This discussion, or this "infertile rut" as Holloway and Picciotto (1978) called it, in the 1970s did produce some highly interesting thoughts on the state and still offers an important reference point. Despite the disagreement as such seems a bit outdated – or a "false dilemma" with Jessop's word (2008:32-33).

Translated into planning theory, I find it very useful to try to open up (Poulantzas') state theory with (Ollman's) dialectics. By transcending the distinction between planning as a 'subject' (full autonomy) and 'thing' (no autonomy) we conceptualise spatial planning as a *condensation of social relations*. In paper 1 I also argue for the need to transcend the common dichotomisation between "Keynesianism" and "neoliberalism" in contexts of crisis management – and I focus rather on the *social relations* at play. This necessarily brings conflict onto the stage – as social relations in our society are constituted by conflicts (i.e. class, racism, sexism etc.). Although Lefebvre stressed state-capital relations in terms of urban planning, he arguably underestimated the struggle and conflict *within* the realm of urban planning. For Lefebvre, planning is 'manipulation of society by the state' (1976). Inspired by Poulantzas and Ollman, I argue for the need to grasp planning as a field of conflicting interests, embedded within other fields of power.

Planning and policy as social relations

There exists a tension through my papers as to whether I see “planning” as more directly linked to “land use” regulations (papers 1 and 5), or more generally as planned transformation in the built environment and urban policy (papers 2, 3 and 4). As long as I keep the application constant throughout the individual papers, I do not see this as problematic. In fact, I would argue the opposite, as different usages reveal different ideas and in different settings can mutually support one another.

The core argument in paper 5, that urban planning should be conceptualised as a *condensation of social relations*, is written in the context of planning theory and outwardly limits itself to planning (and in particular land use regulation). However, the argument could just as easily apply to urban policy. In this dissertation I do not stress the distinction between planning and policy. While Dannestam (2009) investigates Malmö’s transformation explicitly in terms of urban policy (in contrast to planning), Nylund (2014:4) (in contrast to Dannestam) places the comprehensive municipal planning at the centre of analysis. I centre my focus on the outcome of city development in Malmö. In this reality, both planning (assumed as the state/municipality making decisions, often (but not exclusively) related to land-use) and policy (assumed as also including other, and less formal, decision-making processes) work as central processes behind actual changes taking place. Therefore, I have in this dissertation not stressed a distinction between planning and policy. This decision stems from recognition of both planning and policy processes as absolutely crucial to understand post-industrial Malmö. Nevertheless, I do not argue that planning and policy are always the same, neither should one be reduced to the other, and in other studies making these distinctions would surely be useful. My strategy has been to work simultaneously with both concepts in order to investigate the transformation of Malmö.

Malmö as a “post-industrial city”

The vast socio-economic changes that occurred during the last decades of the twentieth century in the capitalist core (and elsewhere) are conceptualised differently in the literature. In this dissertation on Malmö, I utilise the concepts of the “industrial” and “post-industrial” city. In the literature, the choice of which term to apply sometimes seems rather arbitrary, but the different terms can also correspond to different takes on matter: transformations from Keynesian to post-Keynesian indicate a political shift, post-Fordism refers more to a new organization of the urban economy, and “neoliberal city” often includes a bit of everything. Among very influential terms within human geography, it is worth mentioning Harvey’s “entrepreneurial city” (1989), and Florida’s (2004) call for a “creative city” (also

Beauregard 1991, Hall and Hubbard 1996, Short 1996, Hall 1997, Glaeser *et al.* 2000, Baeten 2012a).

The municipality of Malmö seems to favour the concepts “industrial” versus “knowledge city”, as for example, in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan (Malmö 2006a) or in the very first paragraph on Malmö’s English web-page (Malmö 2014a). In recent research on Malmö we find the city’s transformation described as morphing from a working class city (*arbetarstad*) to a knowledge city (Möllerström 2011), from an industrial to an entrepreneurial city (Dannestam 2009), or from an industrial city to “a regional centre for new technology and service” (Nylund 2014:1). Mukhtar-Landgren (2009, 2012) mobilises the same terms as I do, industrial and post-industrial. Even though the conceptual dichotomy of “industrial/post-industrial city” denotes economic changes and declining manufacturing, Mukhtar-Landgren applies it in a policy-oriented text. I think this works very well, as the “industrial/post-industrial” dichotomy gives meaning in both political and economic contexts.

Politically, all kinds of ideas came to the table during the “work of visions” in the mid-1990s – as long as they were not “industrial”. As I elaborate on this in all the four empirical papers (in particular 2 and 4), I will not discuss this further here.

Economically, the transformation of Malmö can be exemplified by the number of employees engaged in different sectors: Billing and Stigendal (1994) investigate the decline of the industrial city, pointing to the share of employment in Malmö manufacturing falling from 40.4 % 1950 to 19.1 % in 1985, or what they call the “productive sphere” dropping from 47.9 % in 1947 to 23.8 % in 1985. While industrial firms in 1945 employed thirty times as many persons as financial capital (banks, insurance companies), in 1985 this fell to only twice as many (*ibid.*).

Table 1 Malmö: employees (16-64 years) in different industries (hundreds). (source SCB)

Type of industry/sector	1987	1996	2004	Change 1987 - 2004
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing	4	2	3	- 25%
Extraction, manufacturing, energy and water provision	222	145	124	- 44%
Engineering industries	86	60	47	- 45%
Building industries	61	45	55	- 10%
Trading, transport, storing, communication	261	241	263	1%
Personal and cultural services, cleaning	103	101	112	9%
Banks, real estate, business services	110	127	197	79%
Public authorities, defense	42	39	54	29%
Research and development; education	74	74	131	77%
Health care, social services; veterinarians	192	179	179	- 7%

Form Table 1, we see that the general trends in Malmö are that Engineering industry and extraction, manufacturing, energy and water provision are declining heavily. This is also the case nationally (see Table 2), just not so strongly. The building industry has also declined in Malmö, but this has declined even more on national levels. In Malmö we see how the patterns described by Billing and Stigendal have continued into the new millennia, with banks, real estate and business service increasing. We also see how research and education increased after the introduction of Malmö University. These sectors also show a strong increase nationally, however.

Table 2 Sweden: employees (16-64 years) in different industries (hundreds). (source SCB)

Type of industry/sector	1987	1996	2004	Change 1987 - 2004
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing	1737	1150	898	- 48%
Extraction, manufacturing, energy and water provision	10016	8091	7114	- 29%
Engineering industries	4559	3760	3361	- 26%
Building industries	2894	2254	2425	- 16%
Trading, transport, storing, communication	8591	7619	7947	- 7%
Personal and cultural services, cleaning	2813	3001	3380	20%
Banks, real estate, business services	3376	4331	5889	74%
Public authorities, defense	2378	2067	2458	3%
Research and development; education	3175	3154	5154	62%
Health care, social services; veterinarians	8150	7939	6829	- 16%

According to data published by Malmö (2011b), these trends have continued well into the new century: between 2000 and 2009 the industries that *increased most* (in numbers of employees) within the sectors of energy and environment were business services, hotels and restaurants, real estate, the construction industry and companies involved in personal and cultural services (Malmö 2011b). Industries showing a *slight increase* included public administration and defense, healthcare and social services, education, commerce, information and communication companies and transport companies, while levels remained *stable* for credit institutions and insurance. For manufacturing, the numbers *declined*. Today the workforce employed in manufacturing rests at only 8% - below the national average (ibid.). Most recent data also shows that these trends continue after 2009 (Malmö 2012b, 2013a).

Although the concept of the “post-industrial” city holds meaning in both political and economic contexts, both Dannestam (2009) and Baeten (2012) have indirectly

questioned if one makes too much out of such distinction as “industrial/post-industrial” and “Fordism/post-Fordism” etcetera. And as we see from data above, neither Sweden nor Malmö has completely *de*-industrialised, in any sense – far from it. Also, turning back to urban policy and planning, there remains no doubt that current planning builds upon the modernist social democratic heritage (cf. Baeten 2012). However, neither can one deny that important and general patterns in policies and economy have changed drastically; whether in terms of how the municipality brand itself, how and what they plan, and also what people in the city do – there should be no doubt that the term “post-industrial” suits the city.

The economy and capitalist crises

If it is a problem that Marx did not elaborate on dialectics or planning, the opposite holds for economy and crisis theory in particular where Marx wrote a great deal and also expressed contradictory sentiments. Therefore, Marxists, have yet to reach consensus on a particular crisis theory (Clarke 1994; Mandel 1981). It is towards this complicated but rich world of Marxist theories on economy in general and crisis in particular we now turn. The topics I choose to address below stem from deliberate choices. I conduct demarcations in recognition of the futility of any attempt to account for all underlying arguments. For discussions on overproduction and the organic composition of capital, for example, see paper 6.

This section contains four parts. In the first two parts I will outline implications dictated by my Marxian point of departure; concerning i) value (and the distinction between *productive* and *unproductive* labour), and ii) class. In part three I will reflect upon the concept of *crisis*, also in terms of *spatio-temporality*, and in the fourth and final part I offer a short discussion on Marx(ism) in relations to what I call its *sparring partners*, i.e. Keynes(ianism) and Schumpeter(ianism).

Marxists implication I: value

In paper 6 I argue that the post-industrial city manifested as a *response to, happened within* and *contributed* to an economy that in the words of Brenner (2009:62) had shown a steadily declining vitality from the 1970s onwards. I argue that there exist several reasons for this, with one related to the strengthening of the *unproductive* sector in the capitalist core. In paper 2 and in the discussion above, I show how such processes played out in the old industrial stronghold of Malmö.

The argument that replacement of productive by unproductive labour stymies economic growth rests on Marx's labour theory of value. Here we must premise that only labour produces new value – as constant capital only *transfers* value to the product. Marxists normally define value as “socially necessary labour time”, which can also be characterised as “real phenomena with concrete effects” (Harvey 1982:36). Beyond this, there are many aspects of Marx's value theory that could be discussed – many which cannot be accounted for here. These include relations between profit and value; whether value can be calculated on the basis of normal accounting procedures and data; discussions between *temporal* and *simultaneous* understandings of value; and whether the concept remains valid beyond capitalism (Harvey 1982, Kliman 2007, Henderson 2014).

One discussion that needs to be elaborated on here, however, is the distinction between *productive* and *unproductive* labour (again: although everyone has different understandings of what constitutes the term value(able), we work within the Marxian vocabulary and discuss productivity vs. unproductivity within the *capitalist economic system*).²⁵ Although Marx makes crystal clear that one *can make* a distinction between productive and unproductive labour, placement of the actual boundary is a matter of huge controversy. This section does not aim to draw that exact boundary – but rather to stress the existence of the distinctions between productive and unproductive labour and that this has concrete effects. For example, the manufacturing of shoes contributes to the overall capitalist economy in a very different way from the buying and selling of derivatives. But some more reflections are called for.

One way of making the distinction is by pointing to different *sectors*, like Roberts (2009) who claims that *productive sectors* normally refer to manufacturing, mining, transport and communication (ibid.:189), whereas the *unproductive* ones would be “finance, real estate, marketing, advertising, government and public services like health and education” (ibid.:43). Kliman (2007), in contrast, states that the Marxian value theory “pertains exclusively to **commodity production**” 2007:19-20, bold in original), i.e. cases in which goods and services are produced for the purpose of exchange; they are produced as commodities. This corresponds to Marx in chapter 1 of *Capital*. Harvey chose instead to point towards chapter 16, where the “only worker who is productive is he who produces surplus-value for the capitalist” (Marx 1976a:644, see Harvey 1999:105). The definition here is arguably more *relational*, as it depends more directly upon one's position towards others.²⁶ One could see these

25 “Marx will, in this vein, make much of the idea that productivity in relation to human wants and needs is very different from productivity in relation to creation of surplus value” (Harvey 1999:102).

26 Harvey does not make as much out of this distinction as Kliman and Roberts do. Harvey adds that: “as we broaden our perspective on that process – from, for example, within the labour process

three takes as different vantage points, but perhaps they can and should be mixed. In this respect, Edvinsson (2005) argues that one should be allowed to draw the “production boundary” differently in different circumstances depending on the purpose of the study and the availability of empirical data. This is also due to the difficulty of distinguishing “between productive and unproductive activities empirically, since unproductive type of work is also performed in productive activities (for example, commercial work in manufacturing enterprises), and vice versa” (Edvinsson 2005:17-18).

What needs to be stated here is that the distinction exists and that it plays an important part in the overall evolution of capitalism. Concerning city building, Roberts (2009) argues that:

real estate companies can make a profit on buying and selling properties and on the fees they charge. But nothing is produced in that process. Profits are also made when private builders build a house and sell it. But here something that people need is produced. From the point of view of capitalism, the productive sector is house building but the unproductive sector is real estate, because that is where the profit that real estate agents make is originally generated. (Roberts 2007:189)²⁷

Of course, for productive activity and productive sectors to exist, they must purchase services from lawyers, estate agents, advertisers etc., and must borrow from banks and financial institutions. Moreover, ‘household labour’ is required to sustain the ‘productive worker’. Capitalism could in no way exist without these activities, and neither could it exist apart from a state in one form or another (cf. Harvey 1982:19). Nonetheless, they are defined as unproductive as they do not *directly* generate profits for the capitalist economy *as a whole*, i.e. workers as “capital’s direct means of valorization” (Marx 1976a:644). Only productive labour produces *surplus* value, which in Marxist theory is the key to economic growth. But again: non-productive labour is not “unproductive” in the sense of being *less important* – only in the sense that it does not contribute directly to the overall profit and growth of capitalism on aggregated level.²⁸ For instance: although a bank worker generates surplus for her company, she does not produce new value for the capitalist system as a whole. This is

outwards to embrace the total circulation process of capital – so the definition of productive labour will broaden also” (Harvey 1999:105).

27 One could add that the profit of real estate agents is not only produced through the building of houses. As the housing sector interlinks with the rest of the economy in all kinds of ways the profit is also extracted from other kinds of productive sectors and activities.

28 “To be a productive worker is therefore not a piece of luck, but a misfortune” (Marx 1976a:644).

what Marx refers to in his intricate claim that some workers produce surplus value, but not value (Harvey 1999, Roberts 2009).²⁹ Similarly, household work can indeed include exploitation without necessarily being productive (Billing and Stigendal 1994: part3). I do not conclude from this that those people producing value have a unique or more important role to play in the making of social change. History has shown that all kinds of social struggles and historical changes have been conducted by people not directly producing value: from women outside the capitalist labour market, to the unemployed in the banlieues.

It must also be stressed that the productive-unproductive distinction has huge potential effects for the world economy and that it must be grasped dialectically – as changes in the composition of productive and unproductive activities must be understood within the whole apparatus of capitalist societies (where also declining reproduction costs influence the level of value, for example). But what in the end is most relevant here, are of course the concrete effects.

Although debates on productive and unproductive labour perhaps appear very remote from people's everyday lives, the distinction has huge implications for city development. The numbers presented above, for example, relate most to Robert's *sector*-approach, and indicate shifts in the centre of gravity between industrial and money capital, and also more general transformations from *productive* to *unproductive* sectors. Thus, when Ilmar Reepalu claimed proudly in a debate concerning *Malmö Live* in the City Council in 2011 that Malmö had created almost 4000 jobs within the travel industry since the mid-1990s, expressing it as “almost an entire Kockums” (Malmö 2011a, see also paper 2), he lost sight of the fact that *different* labour relates *differently* to the processes in the wider economy. A dialectical understanding of the city-economy elucidates the influence of these urban trends over the last decades on more general economic patterns.

Marxists implication II: class

Marxist theory distinguishes itself through its emphasis on *class*. In one of his fascinating lectures on *Capital Volume II*, Harvey asks “what is capital really?” (Harvey 2012c) He starts with negative answers: it is not *production*, as production can of course be non-capitalistic; it is not money, as money pre-dated capitalism; and it is not commodity markets, as they also existed prior to capitalism. Harvey answers

²⁹ Christopher (2013) provides an excellent historical overview how the “productive boundary” has changed within national accounting and politics in USA and Western Europe over the last decade or so.

that capital defines itself through the *social relations between capital and labour that permit the production of surplus value* (Harvey 2012c, see also Marx 1976a, 1978). Capital is a class relation between capital and labour. In this sense capital accumulation “is the means whereby the capitalist class reproduces both itself and its domination over labor. Accumulation can therefore not be isolated from class struggle” (Harvey 1985:1). Economic growth stems from the production of surplus value, and economic growth over time (apart from bubbles etc.) is *per se* a reproduction of class relations.

Whether to apply Marxian theory or any other theory is of course a matter of choice for the individual researchers. However, when one chooses Marxian theory, the emphasis on class is beyond any matter of choice as it goes directly into the core of understanding the capitalist system and economic growth. I cannot delve too deeply into all the various ways class has been operationalised and conceptualised within (and beyond) Marxism. There are interesting and important ways of dealing with class that I do not engage with in this dissertation: I have for example *not* looked at class consciousness, *not* aimed to classify the classes in Malmö, and *not* related class to other structures like e.g. gender or ethnicity.

In the papers I take a look at class in relation to city planning and urban development in a few different ways. In papers 1 – 3 I investigate class through an examination of factions of the capital classes (Harvey 1985, Holgersen and Haarstad 2009), while paper 4 does not examine such intra-class conflicts. In paper 1 the capital class is primarily represented by real estate capital, while in paper 2 the capitalist is also embodied in a hotel mogul, and in paper 3 I include organisations trying to make the “export of sustainability” a strategy for capital accumulation. It is in paper 4 that I most explicitly deal with class and investigate how the planning process contains crucial class components.

An understanding of intra-class conflicts is crucial in order to understand capitalist dynamics. In paper 1 I discuss how different real estate developers responded and reacted differently to the crisis. I conclude that Peab, in contrast to other developers, “took a rather assertive position and looked for new strategies”, and “used the crisis as an opportunity to position itself even better in the market” (cf. paper 1). I explain this partly through the structure of Peab’s own organisation, which contains a large part of the construction chain within the organization and operates as landlord, developer and construction company; and partly by the fact that Peab had long-time leaseholders in Malmö. In this sense Peab could “wait out” the crisis. Latest reports, however, show losses for Peab (Sydsvenskan 2013). More research would be needed in order to answer the question of whether Peab managed to “wait out” the crisis – or if it perhaps occurred the other way around – and which capital strategies proved to be favourable.

Stressing the concept of class does not mean, contra what some non-Marxists believe, that class is the only concept that matters for Marxists (see, for example, my discussion on economic determinism in paper 5). A range of concepts must be scrutinised in order to grasp the capitalist economy and its tendency towards endless growth. For Roberts (2009), profit remains *the* key word. Roberts argues that monetary profit is the general aim of capitalists, and that aggregated profit rates act as some of the best indicators for the general health of capitalism. I agree, but capitalism surely functions more complexly than this characterization. According to Storper and Walker (1989), three basic forces set production in motion: capital investment, strong competition and technological change, where “prices, profits, and disequilibrium growth paths follows from the fundamentals of the capitalist economy” (Storper and Walker 1989:38). I cannot go more thoroughly into many of the major dynamics of capitalism here, but this quote from Storper and Walker can give us a glimpse:

A whole constellation of conditions must be obtained for accumulation to proceed: there must be a growing supply of labor-power, wages must be low enough to allow profits but high enough for workers to purchase what has been produced; money supply must keep pace with accumulation, credit mechanisms must exist to bridge gaps in time and space; forms of business organization must be created to manage production competently; a sales apparatus (retail outlets, sales representatives, merchant distributors and the like) must expand with growing mass of commodities; land must be developed and allocated so that factories, offices and households can be reasonably close, and so forth. (Storper and Walker 1989:202-203)

In addition one could add the necessity of functioning state apparatuses, for example, and highlight that agreements over control of labour are important. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately) there is no space here to give sufficient voice to all these conditions. Paper 6 aims to contribute to a broadening of the discussions within human geography by highlighting the *Law of the Tendential Fall in the Rate of Profit* (LTFRP) and the “productive-unproductive” dichotomy. Paper 6 explains the LTFRP in depth and so I will not outline it in its entirety here, but as it is a highly contested explanation for crises, a few words are needed. I do not understand the LTFRP as an all-comprehensive theory meant to predict any predetermined capitalist development (cf. Kliman 2012), nor do I bother entering into discussions on what Marx *really* meant.³⁰ The interesting question becomes whether theories can contribute to explaining crises. I second Kliman et al. (2013), contra Heinrich (2013), that the LTFRP does not mean to predict a constantly falling rate throughout

30 For example, Heinrich (2013) argued recently in *Monthly Review* that it was Engels’ editing that lifted this theory in *Capital* Volume III - in contrast to Marx’s own beliefs towards the end of his life (see *Monthly Review* 2013).

the history of capitalism, but it can be useful to explain events when they actually do happen.

Crises – and its spatio-temporality

The *general aim* of the whole thesis is to investigate the dialectics between urban planning and policy on one hand, and *economic change and crises* on the other. Above I argued *against* stressing the distinction between “planning and policy” – but this must be done with regards to “crisis” and “change”. Economic crisis relates to “emergency time” sparked by “dangers” (and some would add “opportunities”) that occur relatively abruptly, while economic changes are of course broader than this. Very much broader, in fact, as *permanent change* acts as one defining feature of the capitalist economic system. Still, both concepts, “crisis” and “change”, need to be mobilized as this dissertation concerns itself not only with the two latest crises (i.e. the “industrial crisis” and the current), but also the periods between them. This period, however, including all kinds of urban and economic changes, is also very much defined by the *crisis management* mobilized in response to the so-called industrial crisis. As few people would characterise the period between 2000 and 2008 as “permanent crisis”, I need to use both the terms “crisis” and “economic change”.

The paper discusses issues like crisis theories, crisis management and the 2008 crisis, but I do not rigorously address what I mean by *crisis*. Indeed, as Harvey suggests, *crisis* is a “much overused word” (1985:1), and can refer to anything from ecological disasters to personal bankruptcy. For the world’s millions of poor, the condition of crisis may seem permanent. According to Goodwin and Painter (1996) writers use the word ‘crisis’ with “less precision and greater frequency than most others in analyses of political change” (1996:638).

The crisis I concern myself with is the *economic crisis*: i.e. a “set of failures in the economic and political relations of capitalist reproduction” (Shaikh 1978:219). Above I equated capitalism to economic growth. This as aimed to deliberately show that capitalism, due to production of surplus value, *is* an ever-growing system. Crisis, however, recurrently interrupts this growth. Thus, lack of growth, despite its place as perhaps the most important factor, cannot be interpreted as the sole expression or explanation of crises. Through the discussion on dialectics, it becomes clear that the ‘economy’ cannot be seen as an island or external to other phenomena. In this sense, no economic crisis is purely economic. The extra-economic factors that this dissertation most often takes into account are state and urban planning. Panitch and Gindin (2010) argue that Marx and Marxists have no complete crisis theory due to an

underdeveloped theory of the state.³¹ Jones and Ward (2004) take a similar approach – adding state policy as a “fourth cut” to Harvey’s “three cuts” of crisis.³² Although I draw explicitly on Harvey’s “cuts” in only one of my papers, the emphasis on *spatial* and *temporal* aspects of crisis is present throughout much of the thesis.

The capitalist economy contributes in various ways to the production of spaces and temporalities – and spatio-temporalities set limits and create openings for capital accumulation. As this is a thesis in human geography, it is crucial that crisis-space relations be analyzed in diverse ways – regarding, for example, causes and reasons for crises, consequences and effects of the crises, and the geographical scales and places of crises (see e.g. Lefebvre, 1976, Harvey 1999, 2010a; Gough 2003). This is dealt with (at least to some degree) in several of the papers, and will not be elaborated upon here.

Although the dimension of time contains a central position throughout the papers, I never discuss it explicitly and so include a few necessary reflections here.³³ One question needed settling is the when of crises: how can we grasp their temporality? Marx stated clearly that permanent crises do not exist; economic crises come and go (Marx 2000). Above I argued that the origins of economic crises in capitalism are endemic to the crisis-prone capitalist system, meaning that the reasons for the crisis lie permanently within the system. This complicates the “temporality”: if the “origin” is endemic to the system, then “crisis” must be (latently) present also in times of non-crisis – unarticulated and hidden. But at certain times and spaces these qualities materialize, and this is when we use the word crisis.

The *when* of a crisis contains its counterpart in the *when* of crisis management. In paper 3 I argue that Malmö’s “work of visions” was a policy of crisis management. The “work of vision” lasted for years, became the foundation for the Comprehensive

31 Or with Harvey, “The organization of firms or of nation states, to take just a couple of examples, is not an external event that interferes with a pure circulation process of capital” (1996:66). Other analyses could include different phenomena, where for example issues related to gender would be of high relevance.

32 In *Limits to Capital* Harvey organizes his thinking on space and time in capitalism through “three cuts” at crises. The first cut emphasizes “the underlying source of capitalism’s internal contradictions” (1999:425), where crises like e.g. overaccumulation and LTFRP are considered endemic to capitalism. In the second cut Harvey emphasizes temporal dynamics; how financial and credit institutions both ease the flow of capital and speed up its problems. The third cut aims at integrating the geography of uneven development into crisis theory, and he shows how “spatial fixes” are produced (Harvey 1999, see also Gough 2003, Jones and Ward 2004, Sheppard 2006. For (friendly) critique, see Jessop 2006 and Fine 2006).

33 One temporal aspect that was more central in paper 2 before being cut down, and was central in paper 6 and in this chapter before being deleted more or less altogether, is the reoccurring phenomena of economic cycles and waves.

Plan adopted in 2000 and remains very important for urban policy even today. Has Malmö languished in a situation of “crisis management” since 1994, or did “crisis policy” become non-crisis policy? There exist valid arguments for both views, but although the answer depends on time-scale, most people intuitively claim that the period between e.g. 2000 and 2008 was not a crisis. Examples of other time-scales on crisis management can be seen when the Swedish state lowers its repo-rate (see e.g. paper 1) or introduces state investments as counter-crisis policy (see e.g. paper 2).

To further complicate the picture, we can add levels of *generality*, with the categories of particular, singular, general and universal (see Harvey 2012d). This enables us also to think of crises as neither something that can be explained without investigating the general laws of motion of capital and general patterns of modern capitalism – nor simply as results of such patterns (Harvey 2010a, 2011). In this myriad of spatio-temporalities and possible abstraction, I will try to locate the papers.

The papers relate to *time-scales* in different ways: although they all end in the contemporary situation, the starting points differ. Paper 1 focuses on the 2008 crisis, while paper 2 adds to this the management of the industrial crisis in 1980s and early 1990s. Papers 3 and 4 start with the crisis management designed to tackle the industrial crisis, i.e. the “work of visions” in the mid-1990s. This strategy for getting out of a crisis also became a more permanent policy, and the papers look at how it attracts international attention and (hopefully) capital (paper 3), and how this process contained crucial class components (paper 4).

The dialectics between planning and policy on the one hand, and economic change and crisis on the other, is also approached differently in the papers. In paper 1 I look empirically on the way dialectics between real estate capital and Malmö City’s Planning and Real Estate Office played out after the crisis hit Malmö in 2008. In paper 2 I undertake a similar analysis and add the concept of the “industrial crisis”, and here I also introduce other levels of abstraction – as I in some places discuss the state-economy dialectics at fairly high levels of abstraction. In paper 3 I follow the dialectics between capital and the municipality over time, but focus on the “environmental” aspects. The green fix, evolving pragmatically within the dialectics between capital, Malmö city and the national state, becomes very important for Malmö’s post-industrial project. In this paper the dialectics between capital and the municipality comes to the forefront as I also characterize this dialectic as existing at the heart of the “green fix”. In paper 4 I problematise the highly hegemonic idea that cities, with help from the rest of the state, should compete in “attracting capital”. As papers 5 and 6 operate on another level of generality than the more empirically based papers, we also find interesting interactions between the levels of abstraction, as the theories in paper 5 play a crucial role in my arguments in paper 1.

Before briefly discussing Marx’s *sparring partners*, I would like to make one last reflection on the spatio-temporality of crisis. Above I defined crisis as sets of failures

in capitalist reproduction, much (but not only) related to lack of economic “growth”. One challenge here is that growth and capitalist reproduction are not “either/or” scenarios. Growth works on a scale, often measured from close to 0 % and up, and examination of the underlying health of the economic system becomes similar to medicine where the patient is not always *either sick or healthy*. From this perspective, different temporalities become possible, as, for example, labelling the period since the mid-1970s “relative stagnation” (cf Kliman) or “sliding into recession” (cf R Brenner).

Related to this, reading my papers (especially papers 2 and 6) retrospectively, I see that I frequently use the common concept of “solving” the crisis. Examining the history of Western Harbour since the 1980s it is worth problematising such a concept, as the “solution” in terms of policy (i.e. the crisis management of “work of vision”) became the dominant strategy, and this coincided with Sweden pulling out of the financial crisis in the mid-1990s (as well as other political-economical changes). But the international economy that was fundamental for the post-industrial city, also turned out to be crisis-prone, experiencing decreased wages (many places) fuelled by credit and mortgages (most places). As this economic arrangement hit the wall (at least temporarily) in 2008, Sweden was also hit. Turning back to Malmö: if the current crisis does represent a breaking point of the contemporary “post-industrial” city, Malmö remained “crisis-free” for about a decade. If the “post-industrial transformation” is to be considered a success, it was so for a little more than ten years. Further research must grapple with the potential consequences of this: what does this say about time-compression; what does it say about the (frequency of) crises in contemporary capitalism; and what can it tell us about the urban post-industrial project?

Sparring Partners - engaging with non-Marxist theories

Although the overall theoretical framework in this dissertation relies mostly on Marxists discussions, papers 3 and 6 also engage with non-Marxist discourses.³⁴ Discussing different theories jointly is not easy nor without complications. Due to my theoretical and political background, I am often shocked when reading non-Marxists’ (summary) explanations on what Marx supposedly meant or what Marxism is (often described as a ‘mechanistic model’ or crude economic determinism without human agency) (see e.g. Graham 2005:23-25). Such descriptions are at best superficial and at worst pure nonsense. My worst fear is to treat theories I initially do not endorse in the

³⁴ Marxist crisis theories are presented in paper 6 and will not be repeated or elaborated further here.

same disrespectful manner. In paper 1 I relate to “neoliberal” theory and, although I use the concept primarily as a framework from where other academics have interpreted the crisis, there exists no doubt I am in danger of creating a caricature. In other papers I refer to Keynesian and Schumpeterian theory. In these cases I do engage first-hand reading of both Keynes and Schumpeter as well as proponents of the theories, though this is still less extensive than my reading of Marx and Marxists (see for example differences between papers 2 and 6).

Marx(ism) is my point of departure, and the heterodox economy of Schumpeter(ians) and Keynes(ians) can be conceptualised as *sparring partners*. By this I mean perspectives to not only criticize and denounce, but also derive inspiration from. In this sense, Ricardo, and not Malthus, was Marx’ sparring partner. Today, Keynes and Schumpeter, and not Hayek or Milton Friedman, are the obvious candidates as sparring partners for Marxists (see also Bellofiore 2011 and Storper and Walker 1989).

The viewpoints among Marxists on Keynes differ substantially. One could argue that Marxists within the realization approach, focusing on circulation of capital and therefore also aggregate demand, are more sympathetic towards Keynes than Marxists in the profitability-camp (see Desai and Harvey vs. Mattick Jr. and Kliman). The Marxian-Keynesian divide is discussed in paper 6, and will not be elaborated upon here. Schumpeter is arguably less discussed than Keynes among Marxists. Ironically, Schumpeter, in deep contrast to Keynes, discusses the works of Marx both thoroughly and with deep respect (see Schumpeter 1962). The relation between Marx and Schumpeter is a complex one. Both thought that capitalism would collapse and be replaced by socialism. But where Marx reckoned that capitalism could not survive due to its contradictions and economic failures, Schumpeter argued in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1962) that capitalism would be “killed by its achievements” (p. xiv), and as the “very success undermines the social institutions [this] strongly point to socialism as the heir apparent” (1962:61, see also Elliott 1980:45).

Elliott (1980) emphasizes similarities between Marx and Schumpeter’s visions of capitalism’s future.³⁵ The commonalities include: i) their strong focus upon capitalism’s progressive and creative properties, ii) their analyses of capitalism’s dysfunctional properties, and iii) their respective analyses of the creatively destructive character of institutional and attitudinal change in advanced capitalism (Elliott 1980). Storper and Walker argue that both Marx and Schumpeter had “blind spots” that

35 Foster criticizes Elliott for making too much out of this: “Socialism, according to [Schumpeter’s] outlook, means simply public “control” of the means of production, and has no particular ideological or class component, outside of the gradual erosion of the traditional position of the capitalist class and private property” (Foster 1983:330).

could be overcome by “selectively wedding their visions” (1989:66). The concept of *creative destruction* holds vital for both (see paper 6), and according to Elliot the two respective theories seem to rest “closer to each other than either is to any other prominent vision of capitalism's future” (Elliott 1980:46, see also 1983).³⁶ Of primary importance here is that they both insist on capitalism acting as an *evolutionary* process, where *changes* are the norm. A crisis-free capitalism is an oxymoron. Here Keynes differs substantially, believing that capitalism can become crisis-free (Keynes 1964), evolving into a “cultural paradise” (McCraw 2007:433).

From a Marxian perspective, one can conceptualise capitalism as constantly evolving due to production of surplus value, strong competition (‘grow or go bankrupted’) and technological change (searching for relative surplus value); changes are the normalcy of the economic system. Capitalism contains an “endless and limitless drive to go beyond its limiting barrier. Every limit appears as a barrier to be overcome” (Marx 1973:334, 408).

Schumpeter, like Keynes, was not a Marxist, as he rejected central aspects of Marxian theory like the value theory of labour. Neither did he “account for the contradictions of the capitalist investment process” (Storper and Walker 1989:66). Another major difference between Schumpeterians and Marxists rests in concepts surrounding cycles and technology, where the former see innovation and technology as driving profit, while the latter would rather have it the other way around (see Roberts 2009 and Harvey 1985b, Elliott 1980, Foster 1983, McCraw 2007). For Schumpeter, contra Marx, technological change acts as the prime motor of capitalism (Schumpeter, 1962, 1983), and ‘equal access to capital’ through bank credit as the defining characteristic of capitalism (Foster 1983). This contrasts with a Marxian view, where hunting profit motivates all, and surplus production and private ownership of means of production are defining characteristics. Further, for Schumpeter economic growth and technological change result from the individual entrepreneur's initiative, while Marx derives the entrepreneur from accumulation (cf. Foster 1983). Marx sees both the entrepreneur and technological change as embedded within even broader social structures: surpluses of capital and labour are needed to fuel technological dynamism (Harvey 1985b).³⁷

36 Rosenberg (2011) takes it one step further and labels Schumpeter a ‘quasi-Marxist’. For a very different view, see Foster (1983).

37 According to Storper and Walker (1989:66) Marx advanced a theory of capitalist crisis that underestimated the dynamism of technological change. What must be added though, is that for Marx the conceptualization of “technology” is fairly broad: including concrete forms and physical design of the labour and production process, tools and machines being used, technical division of labour, the quantitative and qualitative deployment of labour powers, levels of co-operation, as well as the chains of command and authority and the use of particular methods of co-ordination and control (Harvey

In Paper 6 I engage the most thoroughly with crisis theory, as I discuss various Marxists' explanations on the current crisis. My reflections on Keynesiansim, Schumpeteriansim and Marxism in relation to crisis theory and especially crisis management in paper 2 are unfortunately short and, arguably, somewhat superficial. My aim, however, is to translate these into *urban policies* that meet with crises. I associate the Keynesian tradition with *continuous* building, the Schumpeterian approach with (facilitating or adopting to) urban *transformation*, and the Marxian one with emphasis on *class struggle* and *conflicting interests*. I then connect this to the Malmö case. My ultimate success is subjective, but my aim is to connect different theoretical takes on planning with different policies (i.e. to observe similar things from different vantage points).

Interestingly, out of the three theories used in paper 2, it is the Marxian perspective that is least developed. This is highly ironic considering my theoretical emphasis throughout the rest of the dissertation. I think this relates to a deep point of tension within the Marxist position on crisis management: critical towards the idea that greater state regulation, control, or ownership can put capitalism on a stable path (vs. Keynes),³⁸ while also seeing the economic crisis as devastating and destructive for the workers and poor – and as something that should be avoided (vs. Schumpeter). If crises are “solved”, they are merely moved around in time and space (cf. Harvey 1999) – and the logical solution becomes to replace the capitalist economic system with something else. But two questions then become apparent: are crises, really, a door opener for social change? And if so, is it via reform and/or revolution, and if revolution: how?

To address the first question first, Marx himself certainly thought so for a period of time. After the crisis of 1847-1848 he concluded that a “new revolution is possible only in consequence of a new crisis. It is, however, just as certain as this crisis” (quoted in Heinrich 2013:1). He then waited eagerly for the next crisis, but the 1857-1858 crisis, while it affected all capitalist centres, did not lead to the any revolutionary moments. After this Marx never seriously placed strong short-term hopes in economic crisis (Hobsbawm 2011, Heinrich 2013). To ascertain whether a crisis gives

1999:99). In this sense, technology has always been important, and technological development surely has a destabilizing effect on the economic at large (see also Sweezy 1973b, Marx 1976a:ch15, Marx 1981).

38 Shaikh contrast Marxists and Keynesian take on crises with arguing that the latter “[...] tend to see the erratic and violent history of capitalist accumulation as a series of errors in “policy.”” (Shaikh 1978:222). This is also very present today when contemporary Keynesians see the “root cause” of the present crisis to be the intellectual failure of economics (see e.g. Skidelsky 2009).

“opportunities” I suggest we turn towards empirical studies. In Malmö’s recent past we have seen how crisis can lead to – and how political-economic interests can promote – stability and permanence, as well as profound changes. Opportunities for more radical changes in terms of grass-root democracy or social equality has, at least to my knowledge, not come as a direct result of any economic crisis. The focus on environmental issues, on the other hand, is more linked with the strategies of getting out of the “industrial crisis” – if not so much in the beginning, then more after the turn of millennium.

Considering the second question, Marxists surely lives in a confusing position; simultaneously living in and dreaming beyond the capitalist way of organising the world. Questions of alternatives often end in debates on “reform or revolution” – or the nature of reforms (whether through transitional demand or non-reformist ‘reforms’, for example). I cannot open the whole debate here, but I will just end with some interesting comments from Radhika Desai. She makes a distinction between ‘reformism’ (i.e. believing that capitalism’s problems can be solved through reforms alone and without questioning its basis) and ‘reforms’ (i.e. *not* being mutually exclusive to revolutions) (Desai 2010). Desai claims that whether reforms are ‘reformists’ or might become ‘revolutionary’ is determined by the wider political situation and the outcome of these processes - “not the labels this or that band of self-styled revolutionaries deem to apply to them” (2010:139). In paper 4 I try to propose two very general alternatives that could perhaps function as guidelines in search of future reforms – which also can take us beyond ‘reformism’. It is such reforms we need to look for.

Chapter 4: What is geography, and where am I? Reflections on methods

According to Graham (2005) all research contains two major concerns: the subject matter (*what*) and the method or approach (*how*). These two interrelated dimensions define the basic methodological framework. According to Marx:

Of course the method of presentation must differ in form from that of inquiry. The latter has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection. Only after this work has been done can the real movement be appropriately presented. If this is done successfully, if the life of the subject-matter is now reflected back in the ideas, then it may appear as if we have before us an *a priori* construction. (Marx 1976b:102)

So, when research is presented as a coherent work, with theories, conclusions and methodologies constituting and strengthening each other, this is seemingly (and can surely be) due to an *a priori* construction. In the worst case, research is coherent because either theory or empirical data is simply added on. While in the best case, coherency is due to a continuous dialectical process, where all elements influence each other over time. Hopefully the reader will agree with me that this research process has been more towards the best case than towards the worst case.

In order to show this, I will in this chapter aim to provide transparency in the research process, as I will discuss my use of methods as well as some broader methodological questions. As there are strong linkages between epistemological and methodological questions, and between theory and methods (Kitchin and Tate 2000), there are dangers of overlapping discussions in the previous chapter. I will strive to avoid this.

The chapter is divided in three sections: In the first section I reflect on working conditions within the discipline of human geography. In the second section I problematise my own position, and in the third and final section I discuss the actual methods being used: i.e. semi-structured interviews, written materials/secondary sources and also some observation.

Human geography as working space

Although this is a dissertation within the discipline of human geography, I draw heavily upon economic theory (in papers 3 and 6) and state theory (in papers 1 and 5); arguably more so than discussing core concepts in human geography like “space”, “place” or “landscapes”. Focusing on discourses from other disciplines is not uncommon within human geography, as geographers for decades have been “struggling with their identity” as “there is no clear consensus among professional geographers as to what constitutes their discipline” (Kitchin and Tate 2000:3). Clifford, French and Valentine argue correspondingly that geographers “have given attention to an enormous range of subject matter” (2010). Kenneth Olwig has claimed that the nature of geography is often “a ghost that is rarely visible under its own name” (quoted in Castree 2005:40). According to Noel Castree geography “was intended to be the ‘bridging’ subject that spanned the gaps created by academic specialisation” (Castree 2005:10). But this peculiar position can indeed also be advantageous. The economist Ben Fine argues, in a comment on Harvey’s *New Imperialism*, that “[g]eography, often considered the poor hybrid relation to other disciplines, is particularly well placed to promote its own agenda and for this to feed into those of other disciplines” (Fine, 2006:153). David Harvey said in a lecture in Bergen in 2007 that geography is a small discipline with problems of identifying itself – and that this is a strength. In this respect urban geography might be a very suitable position from which to investigate the dialectics between urban planning and economic change: an open and humble discipline that acknowledges the importance of using theories “originating” in other disciplines.³⁹

Kitchin and Tate (2000) quote 10 different definitions of ‘geography, and argue that the common themes revolve around the concepts of “place, space, people and environment” (2000:3). But beyond this, is there some particular and peculiar epistemology embedded within the discipline? I.e. do we simply think and work on geographical materials or do we rather think and work geographically (cf. Graham 2005)? The question becomes whether geographers think *differently*, or simply just *more* about space? As we saw in the previous chapter, pioneers like Harvey (1973, see also 2012) and Lefebvre (1991) have opened doors so that we can engaged with the former: namely *spatial* thinking. It is also well know that Lefebvre was not a trained geographer, and the core geographical debates – including those concerning spatial relationships, places, environments and landscapes – are also researched beyond the

39 This does not mean to imply that all geographers necessarily are humble and open, or that other disciplines cannot also be characterized as open and humble.

discipline (Graham 2005:13). Indeed, if time-space relations are constitutive features of social systems, “the question of space is surely too important to be left exclusively to geographers” (Harvey 1985:xi)⁴⁰. But again, as long as human geography remains an open and humble discipline, this only strengthens spatial thinking – hence the discipline of human geography.

As should be evident from reading this dissertation, human geography has a strong radical tradition originating in the middle 1960s and early 1970s when researchers began stressing that social science should have social relevance (Peet 1998, Cloke et al 2004, Castree et al 2009). According to Richard Peet, this radicalism was at the time not conceived in a vague way in terms of feeling sorry for others, but as “taking the side of the oppressed, advocating their causes, pressing for fundamental social change” (1998:68). As the decades have passed this tradition has developed, but surely not disappeared. It is within this tradition that I position myself.

Ståle Holgersen and his research

All research within the social sciences is based on philosophical assumptions and choices (Graham 2005). This goes even for those researchers not aware or not open about their position. In this context, self-reflection on theoretical as well as political positions becomes imperative: “researchers who define their own position in relation to their research could be more objective than their colleagues who hide behind the supposed objectivity...” (Winchester 2000:13). Our beliefs, values and interests are reflected in the research process, from beginning to end: from the choice of theory and methodology, to how to conduct fieldwork and way of presentation.

Relations between the *researcher* and the *researched* must also be grasped within the broader research process. The production of concepts, abstractions, theories, are constantly supported or undermined in a dialectical and continuing processes of enquiry (Harvey 1996, Burawoy 1998). From this it follows that relationships between researcher and researched cannot be construed as “external” or the researcher as “outsider”, but rather as a process where two active subjects “necessarily internalize something from the other by virtue of the processes that connect them” (Harvey 1996:55-56, see also Haraway 1988). Again, as relations are dialectical, not all

40 A search on scholar.google.com on “space matters” shows well-cited articles named “space matters” published during approximately the last decade in several disciplines – like sociology, communication theory, neurosciences, criminology, political science, learning studies and educational technology, just to mention a few (Accessed 29 September 2013).

relations are always of equal importance: although my position must be evaluated, the actual influence over subject matter should neither be under- nor overestimated.

So, who am I? Well, my characteristics are, in brief: white, male, with working class background, with Norwegian citizenship, and, I guess, (some kind of) Marxist.⁴¹ Has this affected my choice to study urban planning, capital accumulation and class, and not for example gender or ethnicity? In many ways: Yes. I could have chosen differently, as there exist countless relevant issues concerning gender or ethnicity that could be addressed. I could have written about how city building, for example, is a highly gendered activity (cf. Fainstein 2001).⁴² In Malmo the questions of ethnicity and racism are incredibly important, not only in relation to segregation in poor neighbourhoods with a high degree of immigrants, but also in relation to the city district I investigate most closely, the Western Harbour, known for its composition as being “white”. Nonetheless, I *did* write about class and capital accumulation.

Back in 1974, Alison Hayford argued that “women were as invisible in geography as they had been in history” (quoted in Peet 1998). Although a rich and influential feminist tradition has emerged within human geography since then, a quick look at my reference list witness that this male dominance has not completely disappeared – at least not within Marxist geography. Exclude the Scandinavians, the list also show that these men most often come from or work in the US (and to lesser degree Canada) and a few European countries. Skin colour goes without saying.

It is important to avoid ‘epistemic fallacy’: “conflating our positioned knowledge of the world with the world itself” (Castree 1996:343). My focus on class and economic relations does not predetermine a worldview in which these are necessarily the most important aspects. In paper 5 I explicitly reject economic determinism, and I will argue that the notion of dialectics I employ in my research impede any deterministic takes (see Jessop 1990, Ollman 2003).⁴³ The notions of “economy” and “class” are also abstractions: although “real”, “actually existing” and of crucial importance. It is simply not a matter of choosing between class, ethnicity or gender, however: these relations of power are also embedded in each other: “class is not gender, but neither is gender gender without class [or] class class without gender” (Katz 2006:240, see also De los Reyes, Molina, Mulinari (eds.) 2005). It is surly the case that investigations of

41 The researcher–researched dialectics often become especially sensitive for Marxists: not only being a political and theoretical orientation on its own, but also one that many people have different and often distinct opinions about.

42 This is also reflected in my interviewees where all five working for private developers are men while five of seven public officers are female - the two men being (of course) directors.

43 I am not saying economic determinism does not exist within current Marxism; see e.g. Carchedi, 2012.

gender and ethnicity, for example, would *improve* my own analysis of capital accumulation and class. I would simply understand class and capital better if I also considered for example gender and ethnicity. This becomes highly relevant in the segregation of Malmö, where Salonen (2012) and Nylund (2014), amongst others, have argued persuasively that class and ethnicity coincide. But it is also relevant in theoretical discussions, as e.g. reproduction costs influence *value*, and capital has always used (consciously or not) ethnic differences as a strategy for governing labour.

Positionality could also be discussed towards the planning theory in paper 5: to what degree is this coloured by the fact that I do research in and on Sweden, a country known for its strong planning tradition and decentralised system (even within a Nordic context) where municipalities have a so-called “planning monopoly” (see e.g. Billing and Stigendal 1994, Nordregio, 2004, Nylund 2014)? Without a doubt my view is to some extent marked by a Swedish focus, but also of great importance are my experiences from Norway and England.

Concerning my own position, a comment concerning Norway is appropriate. In contrast to many geography students I did not travel somewhere else to explore other places or cultures. While many (or most?) geography students *go somewhere* to do field studies, I *came to somewhere*. When I moved to Malmö in 2010, I had never before stepped outside the city’s railway station, and I had never before been in Lund. It was surely an interesting experience coming to Malmö; where everyone I met knew more than me about the city I researched. Talking to all kinds of people (in all kinds of situations) became (and *is still*) an important way of learning about the city.

Before discussing the actual methods and research material, I will shortly discuss some spatial and temporal demarcations in my dissertation. The initial plan for my thesis was to have two cases: the Western Harbour in Malmö and Fjord City in Oslo, Norway. I did also conduct fieldwork in Oslo, but decided in May 2013 to select Malmö as the only case. Thus, my thinking about Malmö has been related to the Oslo case. The Oslo case was also supposed to materialise in two papers, but after thoughtful consideration I decided to instead strengthen the empirical analysis of Malmö (by writing paper 4) and the theoretical parts of the thesis (by writing paper 6). The initial plan was to work solely on city districts, and this is why there might be some confusion today as to whether *Malmö* or the city district *Western Harbour* is my field of research. The frank answer is that it started with a focus on Western Harbour, but has also come to include more general arguments on the city. From this I articulate in the *general aim* in the introduction that I investigate the *city of Malmö in general and its city district of Western Harbour in particular*. Although the focus in the beginning was primarily on Western Harbour, I did also ask in interviews about the city districts relation to the rest of the city. This spatial modification in the field of inquiry has its *temporal* equivalent in that I started with only looking at the responses to the 2008 crisis, and opened up for investigating the historical parts somewhat later

in the process. Here it is important to note that I very much base my conclusion in paper 1 on interviews. Paper 2, going into the history, does not refer to interviews – as I did not interview people about this process (with some exceptions as I talked to people about the background for Western Harbour and Bo01 in particular). When I later interviewed Ilmar Reepalu, the transformation process was well within the scope of the thesis, and quotes from this interview are included in paper 4.

I do not see these spatial and temporal changes as problematic, at least not when discussed openly and hence given transparency. Rather, it shows the dialectical process, constantly having theory meeting Western Harbour meeting my writing meeting methodologies meeting interviewees meeting theory meeting writing meeting supervisors meeting subject matter ... and so on. Crang's comment on the research processes surely applies this: "Analysis should not be an afterthought, but needs to be included in early research plans, of for no other reason, because getting to grips with the materials properly can take as long as creating them in the first place" (Crang 2005:219). One of the main empirical findings – that Malmö met the 2008 crisis with "more of the same" urban policy – was a finding I did not anticipate. As different interviewees told different parts of the same story,⁴⁴ this finding developed into a conclusion. And this particular conclusion initiated the thought process that eventually became research questions for paper 2.

Research material

According to Winchester (2000) there are three kinds of qualitative data: the oral, the textual and the observational. In this dissertation I have mobilized, to different extents, all three kinds: primarily oral (interviews) and textual (document analysis and other texts), but also to some degree observational. I have produced different data from different sources in a corroboratory mode. This strategy is, according to Yin (2009), likely to make any finding or conclusion more convincing and accurate, with the researcher becoming able to address broader or more complicated research questions (see also Flyvbjerg 2006, Valentine 2005). I argue that this is the case in my research, and exemplify this with paper 3. Here the aim was to investigate the environmental aspects related to Malmö's strategies of getting out of the "industrial"

⁴⁴ One public officer explained how they lower the land prices in the Western Harbour, another said Reepalu had told the public officers not to stop building the city, and yet another explained how he personally went into negotiations with a major bank trying to convince them to continue lending money to local projects.

crisis, and we come to call this strategy a *green fix*. In the process we mobilised different kinds of data. From the interviews it became clear that this was (also) considered an economic strategy for *both* the developers and the municipality, and from the documents we saw how such issues became stronger over the years: constituting two crucial components in our understanding of Malmö's green fix. This could not have occurred if we excluded any of the two major forms of method.

So, how did I choose my methods? Was it based on my research questions, or perhaps vice versa? Well, frankly, as I wrote my Master thesis in this format and my closest colleagues normally utilise the same method, alternatives were never considered. This has of course affected the research questions. In such situations, Yin (2009) argues, when the favoured method is predisposed by the researcher or academic department, the most important justification is that there are valid connections between research questions and the methods. I hope to show that this is the case.

As I have been living in Malmö, the production of data has been conducted more or less continuously during the four years (even though the interviews were done in two major blocks, see Appendix B). A potential disadvantage has been that the "focus" was never *only* on collecting data. From an advantageous perspective, it has been easier and more stimulating to play dialectically with theoretical and empirical work. Acknowledging the potential benefits that might occur from projects evolving during a process, it is important to refrain from writing any initial research questions in stone. However, the openness and flexibility cannot be total as it could lead to total chaos. I have therefore used research questions throughout the process as guidelines to avoid becoming totally lost. These questions have also been open for negotiations. This has helped me to go forward, while maintaining openness and keeping doors open (see also Clifford, French and Valentine 2010:7).

This combination of applying different data from different sources and maintaining an openness and flexibility in the process, might be criticised for failing to "develop a sufficiently operational set of measures and that 'subjective' judgments are used to collect data" (Yin 2009:41). I hope to demonstrate in this chapter that this is not the case, and also that this critique, concerning transparency, subjectivity, validity, is also relevant for other compositions of methods. Harvey is frank on this:

I would be foolish to deny that there is any constitutive danger of circularity and tautology here. To be sure I might, like anyone else (from positivist to humanist), see only what I want to see and merely reconstruct experience in theoretically given terms. (Harvey, 1985:xv)

These are concerns that must be addressed independently of the chosen method. The only antidote is openness, honesty and transparency – and in order to strive towards this, it is time to discuss the actual research material.

Interviews

Interviews are probably the most commonly used qualitative techniques (Kitchin and Tate 2000:213). I have conducted the interviews in a way that can be characterised as “semi-structured” (Longhurst 2010) or “interview guide approach” (Kitchin and Tate 2000).⁴⁵ This means some degree of predetermined order, as some questions and/or topics are prepared in advance, but also strong degrees of flexibility – not least since all interviews develop differently (Dunn 2000). Advantages with this approach is that it gives the interviewer freedom to explore “specific avenues of enquiry” (Kitchin and Tate 2000:214) and allows interviewees to describe and explain their experiences and lives in their own words and in informal-tone conversations that go beyond “yes-and-no” type of answers (Valentine 2005, Longhurst 2010). I have argued elsewhere that semi-structured interviews in case studies on urban developments can have different functions within a methodology. For example:

To find my bearings in subject matter, and help me understand which written sources were (un-)important, and ii) to 'fill some gaps' and to become aware of and (hopefully) clear up misunderstandings and confusions. iii) To “test” my own notions of how things were connected and functioned, and iv) they were sources for information that was not articulated anywhere else. (Holgerson 2007:52)

I still think this holds today. Kitchin and Tate, in contrasting interviews to questionnaires, stress how interviews allow for “more thorough examination of **experiences, feelings or opinions**” (2000:213, bold in original). As all my interviewees are “experts” and/or were selected because of their *position* – the examination of experiences and opinions can be said to be favoured over feelings (see also Longhurst 2010).

I have conducted 19 interviews in face-to-face meetings (one by telephone). I have also conducted 13 interviews on the Oslo case (before deciding to only have one case). The interviews lasted approximately 45 – 90 minutes and have been recorded. The selection of interviewees follows mainly from my research questions, and all were interviewed due to their positions, having particular positions within the municipality or elsewhere, or as being relevant developers. “Snowball sampling” was also used occasionally, meaning that I used one contact to help find another contact, whom in turn helped find yet another contact (Valentine 2005, Kitchin and Tate 2000). This

⁴⁵ “Semi-structured” is contrasted to “structured” and “unstructured” forms of interviews (Dunn 2000, Longhurst 2010), and the “interview guide approach” is contrasted to “closed quantitative interview”, “structured open-ended interviews”, and “informal conversational approach” (Kitchin and Tate 2000).

was mostly used early in the process (especially Dalman provided good suggestions) as well as in the process of paper 3.

The interviews in Malmö are with public officers in the municipality (7 – including one no longer working in Malmö and one who also is a former researcher on Malmö), politicians (3), real estate developers operating in the Western Harbour (5), leaders in organisations working on (the export of) urban sustainability (2) as well as one former chief librarian in Malmö who was also active in Malmö’s “work of vision”, and one former researcher on energy efficiency in housing who is now working for the housing cooperation HSB. For a complete list, see Appendix B. Although 19 semi-structured interviews is not a vast number in a PhD-thesis, the selection is not arbitrary and I have covered important positions. Within the municipality I have interviewed the mayor (between 1994 and 2013), the Director of Planning Office, Director of Real Estate Office and Director of Environment Department, as well as planners working directly with Western Harbour on an everyday basis (including both the former and current Project Manager on Western Harbour at the planning office, and the current Project Manager at Real Estate Office). The developers also hold leading positions within companies operating at the Western Harbour. I have interviewed four very large actors: Market Area Director in Diligentia – the developers of 100 000 m² large *Masthuset*, planning to include 1500 new homes, as well as office space, trade and service space (Diligentia 2010, Malmö 2014b). I also interviewed the Division Manager at PEAB – who is developing the 190 000 m² large *Varvstaden* that are planned to include 1500 new homes and 5000 new workplaces when finally finished in 2030 (Malmö 2011c, Malmö 2011d, Malmö and Peab 2008). Peab also owns and develops the old area around the Kockums Crane called *Dockan* together with JM and Wihlborgs – in a consortium named Dockan Exploatering AB for which I interviewed the CEO. I interviewed the CEO at Midroc Property Development, planning 450 homes, as well as offices and hotels at *Hamnporten*, in the southwest corner of the Western Harbour (Malmö 2012a). Finally, I interviewed the Project manager at Botrygg, a (in this context) smaller developer: building two buildings in *Fullriggaren* (Malmö 2009).

If qualitative methods in general are easy to learn but hard to conduct, this is especially true for interviews. Kitchin and Tate (2000) reminds us that interviews are more than simply talking to people, but rather a “complex social interaction in which you are trying to learn about a person’s experiences or thoughts on a specific topic” (2000:215). My strategy was to let people talk relatively freely, while trying to direct the conversation so that I was able to ask all major questions in the agreed upon time frame. Refraining from intervening in or steering the interviews does also have its drawbacks, as interviewees can talk of topics that are relatively less interesting or important to the research. Because of the freedom and flexibility in semi-structured interviews, it is important that the interviewer steer the direction of the interview and not let “the conversation take off on wild tangents” (Kitchin and Tate 2000:214). I

felt this worked fine in all the interviews, except one: here I had a strong feeling afterwards that I should have better directed the conversation to more relevant topics.

To my advantage, I have conducted interviews with both planners and developers in previous research (Holgersen 2007, 2009) and also worked as a planner in the municipality, frequently having meetings with private developers, for two and a half years. Nonetheless, interviewing still requires a “high level of interpersonal skills” where one should put the interviewee at ease, keep the questions and conversation interesting and not upset the conversational flow (Kitchin and Tate 2000:215). It is of course not easy to self-evaluate ones own performance on all these matters, but as the main point about interviews is to produce data and knowledge that can be applicable in research, one way of measuring the success of the interviews is perhaps by looking at the usage of the interviews in the papers. In this respect I am fairly satisfied. In papers 1, 3 and 4, the use of interviews has been decisive for the outcome and the arguments I make. Paper 2 is based on conclusions from paper 1 and thus also indirectly based on interviews.

As briefly mentioned above, when I conducted the first round of interviews (August – November 2010) I did not intend to include Malmö’s “industrial crisis” in my research. This was therefore not discussed. However, in interviews conducted in 2012 and 2013, this is included when relevant. Research on the relationship between *ecological sustainability* and urban development, which resulted in paper 3, was likewise not initially intended as a research question for my dissertation. It became apparent from very early that this was absolutely central in contemporary development of Western Harbour. As developers were more than willing to talk about it, and I personally found it highly interesting, this became an important part already from the very first interview. When I started to work on this data together with Andreas Malm, it was not necessarily thought of as part of the dissertation. However, the linkages to “crisis management” soon became obvious, and as it fit nicely within a context of political-economic context I reckon it contributes well to the overall thesis.

It is also important to reflect on *positionality* and *reflexivity* during the interview process, not least in terms of power relations between the researcher and the informant (Valentine 2005). As my interviewees are selected based on their positions, my personal power position as a researcher is perhaps somewhat less dominant than if I selected interviewees from “marginalised groups”, for example. In most interviews, normally as part of presenting myself, I also mention that I have previously worked as spatial planner. According to Valentine, this can be beneficial:

Sharing the same background or a similar identity to your informant can have a positive effect [and] produc[e] a rich, detailed conversation based on empathy and mutual respect and understanding. (2005:113)

The interviews with developers were all conducted at their offices, of which 4 out of 5 were in the Western Harbour. Almost all interviews with politicians and public officers were conducted at their offices, except one interview held at a café. Being at the interviewees' own locations provided a "safe" place where they arguably speak in a more relaxed manner compared to e.g. meeting them at the university (Valentine 2005). I recorded the interviews to allow myself to remain more focused on the conversation during the interview and, of course, allow access to the whole interview afterwards. As the interviews were organised in semi-structured blocks, I coded the interviews correspondingly when I transcribed them. Responses that concerned the Western Harbour were coloured brown, the economic crisis coloured red, relations between the Western Harbour and the rest of the city became blue, urban environmental sustainability became green, and general talk about the interviewee and their cooperation, business or work was coloured yellow. This also materialised in the various papers; red formed the basis for paper 1; green the basis for paper 3; blue the basis for paper 4, and brown and yellow functioned as background material. This coding helped me – if nothing else to save time – when writing the papers and I continuously needed to go back to the transcriptions. After developing this system "all by myself", I also read that this was a highly conventional and recommended way of coding interviews (see Crang 2005:223).

I have of course received valuable information from many other people than those 19 interviewees. Some of these could be classified as e-mail interviews, but as most of them are only between 1 and 3 questions I classify them as "personal communication" or "email communication". Some are used directly in my research, like Göran Rosberg at the municipality of Malmö (15.09.10, 12.10.10, 14.10.10, dates for received mails), Susann Bard at Bostadskreditnämnden (BKN) (07.11.11), Daniel Liljeberg, former political adviser for Minister Mats Odell (31.10.11, 3.11.11), Elisabet Corengia from the municipality of Malmö (03.04.12) and researcher Mikael Stigendal (10.02.14).

In the kind of research I have conducted, there is also a choice to be made on whether to disclose or keep the interviewees anonymous. Openness should also here be the guiding principle, as this also enables the readers and other researchers to more easily recollect the data and review the entire case (Yin 2009:181). In some cases anonymity is needed, to protect the interviewees against repression of any kind, or simply because the participant would not allow for the interview without. In the three papers wherein I refer directly to interviews, the case of anonymity is somewhat intermediate: the names are not there, but the titles are, and sometimes also the dates of the interview. One exception is paper 4 where Ilmar Reepalu contains such an important position that he is referred to by name. In this "intermediate" position, the names of the interviewees will not show when searched for on Internet, but there are still possibilities for double-checking the information and identifying the interviewees. I do not consider this to be problematic as all the informants are interviewed as official

persons and holders of certain positions. When the interviewee has asked not to be quoted on certain things, or wanted to see “their” quotes before submitting the text – this has been respected.

Written material, secondary data and observations

Below I will discuss the role of written material and secondary sources in my thesis, and end with just a few reflections on my usage of *observations*.

Many different forms of material have been important in my research. For example, I drew upon various planning documents, city council meetings and other municipal documents of different sorts (i.e. juridical building contracts between developers and the municipality), business-reports (with different clients), as well as documents from different political groups and businesses and business interests. For a review of the academic literature on Malmö, see chapter 2. I also used local newspaper archives extensively in the early period of my fieldwork in order to find my way in subject matter (see Clark 1997). The written material I have used is commonly referred in the literature as “secondary data”, at least if this concept is defined as “information which has already been collected by someone else and which is available for you, the researcher, to inspect” (Clark 1997:57). “Secondary data” is also defined in many different ways (see e.g. White 2010, defining it as data primarily produced by the state), and classification of “primary” and “secondary” differs according to usage. Another concept that could be mobilised is “written material”, but this does not cover everything either, as I also refer to *oral* sources (e.g. with the breaking of ground for Malmö Live and discussions in the city council). Alternatively I could have established a broader “oral” category that also included the interviews. Another term I could have mobilised was “documentary sources”, which Winchester argues, “may include maps, newspapers, planning, documents, and even postage stamps!” (2000:8). But as I draw extensively on published research, this is not sufficient. We simply have to live with the fact that these categories are not perfect, and in the following I simply apply the general “written material and secondary sources”. Let us now rather look at the actual documents.

I cannot delve into detail about all data applied here, but I would like to discuss more thoroughly some data that are of high importance in my research, namely those documents written, commissioned, financed and/or published by the municipality of Malmö. As Cloke et al (2004) reminds us: although we often assume reliability and accuracy *because* data are official, one must keep in mind that governments are not “neutral referees overlooking society but players actively involved in the game”

(ibid.:42).⁴⁶ Governments are governing, they are monitoring this governing, and they communicate all this. (This source criticism is of course highly relevant concerning all governmental data I draw upon, not only those from the municipality, see also Kitchin and Tate 2000.)

Malmö has also been fairly active in including and publishing various kinds of documents authored by others. I think this is a positive thing that shows vitality and openness within the municipality. Nonetheless, although the *work of vision* was “conducted without political piloting” (Malmö 1996:5), and the more recent *Commission for social sustainability* is “politically independent” (Salonen 2012), it is still important to keep in mind that it is the municipality that has appointed the commission in the first place, and decides how (and how much) they will use the results afterwards. In these meetings between the municipality and people in academia, research centres, business and organisations, openness and transparency on source criticism are, again, of crucial importance. Two texts I have used extensively in this dissertation are Stigendal’s *Varför finns Malmö? Krisen i ett Historisk Perspektiv* from 1996, and Billing’s *Malmö 1990-tal i ett Kort Historiskt Perspektiv* from 2000, both texts commissioned and published by Malmö city. (Lennart Schön’s *Malmö, Från Kris till Tillväxt* (1996) is the same situation.) According to Stigendal, he was independently working on the text and had the “full freedom” to write what he wanted: otherwise he would not have accepted the task (Stigendal, e-mail correspondence, 10 February 2014, my translation). But it is still important to keep in mind the context of such documents.⁴⁷ According to Dannestam, these texts were produced as part of the municipality’s internal efforts to communicate positive discourses about the city (2008:35).⁴⁸ In order to increase transparency, I have added an Appendix A where I first list all documents referred to in this dissertation *authored* by the municipality of Malmö, and then also all documents that to my knowledge were *published* or *commissioned* by the municipality of Malmö.

In another paper, not included in this dissertation, I have looked at income differences and other differences between city districts in *Områdesfakta för Malmö* (Area Facts on Malmö), 2004, 2006 and 2008 (Holgersen 2012) – also documents

46 This corresponds also to my take on urban planning in paper 5.

47 Even though these texts are commissioned and published by the municipality, I do not (contra Mukhtar-Landgren 2012) refer to the municipality as the author.

48 Dannestam does not discuss Schön’s text, only Stigendal and Billing. However, the argument would apply to Schön as well.

published by the municipality.⁴⁹ I shortly mentioned this here, as this has been important for my overall research, and I also refer to this in papers 1, 3 and 4.

Another methodological aspect that should be discussed is the role of *blogs*, as I refer to both Krugman's comments in the *New York Times*, and Roberts' blog: www.thenextrecession.wordpress.com. These blogs, as well papers (like Kliman et al. 2013) published places like *Social Science Research Network*, are published outside the peer-review system. This means not that the intellectual importance necessarily is low (often the opposite), but here I guess the authority of the text depends even more on the authority of the author.

Papers 5 and 6 are different from the four others, in the sense that they do not build directly on empirical data from my field study, but more or less exclusively on work conducted by other academics. They hence need methods and methodologies that are normally not discussed in the "methods in geography"-literature. Paper 5 contains a history of its own – as the idea was first developed in my master thesis, matured when working as a municipal planner, and finally was articulated after re-reading Ollman as a PhD student. The basis for paper 6 is a literature review of existing takes on crisis in Marxism and critical human geography. I then extract conclusions and ideas from this.

I have not intentionally included observations as methods for my research. Since moving to Malmö in 2010, I immediately started frequenting places like the Western Harbour. Observations have therefore, consciously or not, been a part of my process of knowledge production. Attending ceremonies and festivals as well as open meetings concerning urban issues in the Malmö library and elsewhere as a spectator, has also contributed in this respect. The ceremony when Ilmar Reepalu, Petter Stordalen and others came to break ground for *Malmö Live* is referred to explicitly in paper 2. Even though speeches, festivals and public arrangements often embellish reality, they can also illuminate something of official policies and about the feeling in the city (for example what politicians can say without being accused of lying). I also participated in a workshop on "creativity and Malmö" at Malmö University on the 29th of November 2013. All these encounters with the municipality and the city have contributed in shaping my understanding and knowledge of the subject matter – and reflect what is called "additional information" (Yin 2009:110) in academic literature.

⁴⁹ See Malmö 2004a, 2006b, 2008.

Chapter 5: Final reflections and future research questions

The general aim of this thesis is to:

understand the dialectics between urban planning and policy on the one hand and on the other economic change and crises in the city of Malmö in general and its city district of Western Harbour in particular.

In the introduction I also articulated two research questions. These questions, we will recall, were:

- + *With what urban policies did Malmö respond to the 2008 economic crisis and to the earlier “industrial” crisis?*
- + *What characterises Malmö’s transformation from an industrial to a post-industrial city and which strategies have been used?*

In order to answer these questions, I have conducted interviews in Malmö with developers, public officers and others, and mobilised different kinds of written material and secondary sources – both policy and planning documents. For a more exhaustive discussion of how each of these methods has been applied in the various papers corresponding to the research questions, see chapter 4. Since empirical findings are discussed in several papers, I will provide some summarising conclusions here. The two questions will be answered through three steps below; where the first step corresponds to the first research question, while the second and third address the second research question. As all conclusions are also new beginnings, I will correspondingly suggest some direction for future research. Finally, I will round off with a broader and more general discussion of the crisis-city dialectics, which can similarly serve as a starting point for future research.

I

I argue that Malmö met the 2008 economic crisis by cementing the urban policies that were already established in the mid-1990s. The mayor said (and ensured) that the building of the city should not stop due to the crisis: land prices in Western Harbour were renegotiated, the municipality tried to convince local banks to continue lending money, and new post-industrial landmarks like shopping centres and Malmö Live were planned and built.

Through analysing different interpretations of the responses to the “industrial crisis”, I argue there are some interesting parallels with the reactions to the 2008 crisis. In both the “industrial” and the “post-industrial” cases the municipality of Malmö actively reacted to the crises through *building more of the same* – meeting the “industrial crisis” with industrial policies and the current crisis with more post-industrial policies. I argue that one important cause of the latest crisis is that the political-economic relations and urban ideas that contributed to developing “post-industrial Malmö” are still hegemonic. One important conclusion that can be drawn from my fieldwork is that building *more* is not always a good idea – especially not when building something that better corresponds to yesterday’s demands.

Only time will tell how this dialectic between the crisis and urban planning and policy will play out, as Malmö continues to produce the post-industrial city. In the here and now, we find in Malmö a goldmine for further research on local government and governance. What are the relations between politicians, planners and capital? How do *personal* relations develop into more *general social* relations (as between politicians and capitalists)? It could also be of high interest to conduct a more in-depth study on power relations among construction, development capital and politicians in Malmö, as well as between these particular factions of capital and other factions of capital.

II

Malmö met the “industrial crisis” with more industrial policies until a certain point when the city decided to change its urban path drastically. I argue that one of the post-industrial strategies for getting out of the “industrial crisis” comes in *green*. As a form of economic crisis management in times of ecological crisis, the housing exhibition Bo01 proved to be the perfect “win-win” situation for Malmö: the *building* of an *environmentally friendly* city district. Related to corresponding state policies and subsidies, and fuelled by international attention and recognition, Malmö’s ecological profile was constructed via a pragmatic process. “Sustainability” went from being a subordinate field of policy to becoming central to Malmö’s urban policy. This was also due to the international recognition Malmö received. To brand something – which may or may not have positive ecological effects – as *green*, has become a strategy for overcoming crises of capital accumulation. In paper 3, this is called a *green*

fix – a mobilisation of all kinds of environmental policies and “sustainability” as a means to generate economic growth and overcome crises of accumulation.

In terms of further research it would be very fascinating to analyse similar projects in other cities in terms of *green fix*. Concerning Malmö, it would be interesting to try to calculate how much the municipality and local capital have actually gained in pecuniary profits from the city’s *green fix*. Also worth developing further is the critique raised in paper 3, that the *green fix* conceals crucial factors of scale: stressing the accounting of local emissions over global impact is problematic and conceals real problems in a world of global warming.

III

I argue that the metamorphosis of Malmö and the planning process that facilitated it contain crucial *class components*. This is evident in terms of the changing class composition and distribution of power and money amongst classes within the city. However, as stressed in paper 4, class components are also inscribed in planning and policy processes that (re)produce post-industrial Malmö. In this sense, the transformation of Malmö was not a neutral political operation. Rather, social polarisation has been congenital to the urban planning and policies that have dominated Malmö since the mid-1990s, both in terms of the built environment (such as the building of Bo 01 and Malmö Live) and in terms of urban policy (e.g. the aim of attracting highly educated and “resourced” people). In conceptualizing the transformation in terms of class, it becomes problematic to characterise the process as positive with only some residual social problems that need to be solved (*pace* the current “standard story”). Significant future research could follow from this. For instance, given the existing global economy, what alternatives did Malmö actually have to the socially polarised post-industrial city? What other types of post-industrial cities were possible? Further research is also required to develop a deeper understanding of class relations in the city of Malmö. A better understanding of these relations could help us to further understand why Malmö met the crises with “more of the same” – and more generally, supplement theorizations of class in the city. It would be highly important to include studies on class consciousness here, investigating both *Klasse an sich* and *Klasse für sich*, not least in relation to suburbia and the Swedish Million Program. This research would become even more refined through the inclusion of other power relations like gender and ethnicity.

IV

Hopefully, it is as evident for the reader as it is for the author how fascinating the city of Malmö is for investigating dialectics between urban planning and economic crisis.

The three conclusions presented above are interrelated, and linkages can be found in social relations at play. In this dissertation, I suggested that we conceptualise planning as a “condensation of social relations”. Rather than seeing planning as either autonomous (a subject), or without any autonomy (a thing), one needs to stress relations between “planning” and “extra-planning”: urban planning is constituted by social relations, like class.

The economy that has been underlying post-industrial Malmö has proven to be just as crisis-prone (if not more) as earlier versions of capitalism. Grasping relations between cities and the economy dialectically, I propose a view of the post-industrial city as: a response to, happening in the context of, and contributing to the economic trends during the last two decades. I suggest in paper 6 that different theoretical explanations should be mobilised in order to understand the economic crises, and that theories related to overproduction and the organic composition of capital can both help us explain the crisis and shed a new light on contemporary cities.

As the capitalist core struggles to regain decent growth rates, the planning of post-industrial Malmö continues with full force. Urban policy represents an attempt for the city to keep its head above water through attracting capital and “resourced people”. Post-industrial ironies are everywhere: beautiful places and buildings, like the Western Harbour, the world-famous 190 meter “twisting” Turning Torso, Malmö Live and new huge shopping centres like Emporia, are shaped in order to attract money from an unhealthy economy. The glorious facades of the shopping centres are dialectically related to what is inside the buildings: low-paid workers and commodities made (elsewhere), by very-low-paid workers. The world’s most ecological city district is filled with people who have a daily consumption pattern that, if shared with the rest of the population on this planet, would ruin the planet altogether.

It is argued in the literature (Oosterlynck and González 2013) that there have not yet been substantial suggestions for alternative urban paths in Europe during the current crisis. The Malmö case is no exception. As processes of financialisation seem to continue, as austerity policies linger in many countries, as the organic composition of capital seems to rise and various kinds of unproductive labour still seem to be the most attractive, what will happen to Western cities? The contemporary urban-economic organisation is surely not becoming any less crisis-prone.

While watching all these contradictions play out, we can see few powerful and realistic alternatives to the post-industrial city, that exist neither in Malmö, nor elsewhere. At the time of writing, alternatives to the “post-industrial city” seem to

occur “nowhere”, and social polarization to occur “everywhere”. However, cities are also active contributors to processes happening “nowhere” and “everywhere”, and we know that changes happen anywhere. Lack of alternative mental conceptions does not stop the evolutionary process of capitalism. Changes will continue to occur. Question is which changes. There are no reasons, neither socio-economic nor ecological, for delaying the search for alternative ways of organising cities (and the economy at large). The future of Malmö will likely be as interesting as its fascinating history.

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Appendix B: Interviewees

2010

Andreas Ivarsson, Market Area Director [Marknadsområdeschef] in Diligentia. 26.08.2010, at Västra Varvsgatan 19, Malmö.

Eva Dalman, Urban planner in Lund municipality. Formerly worked at Planning Office Malmö municipality, as Project Manager for Western Harbour and Area Architect for Bo01. 27.08.2010, at Västra Stationstorget 10, Lund.

Tove Dannestam, urban planning in Malmö municipality, former researcher on Malmö's transformation. 01.09.2010, at Kafé near Stadshuset, August Palms Plats 1.

Pernilla Andersson, Project Manager, Real Estate Office, Malmö municipality. 10.09.2010, at August Palms plass 1.

Andreas Svensson, Division Manager at PEAB. 05.10.2010, at Ruben Rausingsgatan 11A, Lund.

Magnus Skiöld, CEO at Midroc Property Development. 06.10.2010 October, at Jungmansgatan 12.

Lennart Ottosson, CEO för Dockan Exploatering AB. Dockan.se. 06.10.2010, at Dockplatsen 1.

Annika Mattson, former researcher on energy-efficiency in housing, from Lund University. Currently working at HSB. 11.10.2010, in Turning Torso.

Joachim Arcari, Project manager [Entreprenadsansvarig] developments in Western Harbour, Botrygg. 20.10.2010, at Fullriggaren, Western Harbour.

Ulrika Signal, Project Manager Western Harbour, at Planning Office Malmö municipality [Projektledare Västra Hamnen, stadsbyggnadskontoret] 03.11.2010, at August Paml's plass 1.

Sven Nilsson, former chief librarian in Malmö and active in the "work of vision" in 90s. 08.11.2010, at Cafe by Triangeln, Malmö.

2012

Christer Larsson, Director of Planning Office, (stadsbyggnadsdirektør). 12.01.2012, at Stadsbyggnadskontoret.

Börje Klingberg, Director of Real Estate Office. 01.03.2012, at Stadsbyggnadskontoret.

Anders Skans, Group leader for Left Party in City Council. 23.05.2012, at August Palms plass 1.

Stefan Lindhe, Group leader for Moderates in City Council. 24.05.2012, at August Palms
klass 1.

Håkan Dahlfors, Vice President Swedish Trade, Affärsområdesansvarig Miljö & Cleantech,
24.08.2012 (conducted on telephone).

Håkan Knutsson, CEO at Sustainable Business Hub AB. 24.08.2012, at Espresso House,
Lund.

Katarina Pelin, Director Environment department, City of Malmö Sweden, 29.08.2012, at
Miljöförvaltningen Bergsgatan 17.

2013

Ilmar Reepalu, Social democratic representative in City Council. Mayor of Malmö 1994 -
2003. 29.08.2013, at August Palms klass 1.

Appendix C: Co-author declarations

Lund, 17 February 2014

To whom it may concern,

The authors hereby certify that the paper entitled "*Green fix" as crisis management. Or: In which world is Malmö the world's greenest city?*" is based on 70 % / 30% contributions by the respective authors Holgersen / Malm.



Ståle Holgersen

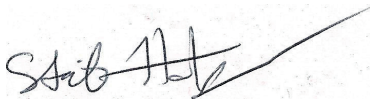


Andreas Malm

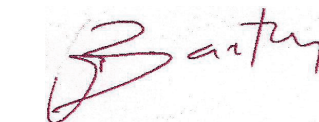
Lund, 9 March 2014

To whom it may concern,

The authors hereby certify that the paper entitled *Beyond a liberal critique of "trickle down"; dass and city planning in Malmö*, is based on 70 % / 30% contributions by the respective authors Holgersen / Baeten.



Ståle Holgersen



Guy Baeten