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CHARACTERIZING URBAN CENTRES

Reading configuration as point, line, field

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ABSTRACT

As cities are growing the need for complementary sub centres increases, both in order to distribute amenities and to make resources more accessible for citizens, as well as to relieve the pressure on the city core. Such planning strategy, a kind of decentralized concentration, has been seen as a mean for holding back urban sprawl in Stockholm. Lately, urban centres are also argued to contribute to the development of more equal living conditions making opportunities, service, and urban life accessible also in more peripheral urban locations. The values of 'suburban urbanities' has also been highlighted in a way that reach far beyond the commercial activities (Vaughan 2015).

The Regional planning authority in Stockholm as well as the City of Stockholm identifies a number of regional subcentres and 'urban boulevards' that should connect the city since and make it less fragmented. The social incentive for this strategy is prominent in both plans. However, these subcentres are dependent on urban centrality which needs to be taken into consideration.

The strength, or the success, of a subcentre is partly influenced by urban design interventions and is argued to be related to 1) the configurative properties (distribution of space) and 2) land use parameters and density (distribution *in* and *through* space) (Koch 2016; Hillier 1999; Vaughan 2010). In order to increase the understanding for what urban design interventions that may be efficient, this paper will draw from the concepts developed by Stan Allen (1999) of point, line and field and John McMorrough (2001). The combination of the configurative perspective and the point-line-field perspective is argued to contribute with knowledge of how urban form generates and supports the emergence of *urban centrality* and the development of subcentres with implications not only for consumption and mobility, but also for social outcomes such as urban life and equal living conditions. The empirical application aims to illustrate how configurative analysis complement the point-line-field theory in describing the character of the centres and the findings are argued to contribute to the identification of more precise and efficient urban design interventions of how to develop the centres.

KEYWORDS

Urban centre, subcentre, urban path, point-line-field, configurative properties, urbanity, equal living conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

In some neighbourhoods there is only one specific street, or one place, that can be described as 'central' and typically, urban life is concentrated here. In other neighbourhoods it could be difficult to identify the most important street, the situation is more diffuse. Urban life is more distributed and non-residential and residential activities are mixed to a higher degree. For a business that depends on influx of customers that would appear only if it is convenient – for instance, drop-in customers – the difference is illustrative; in the first type of neighbourhood there is more or less only one street that offers a possible alternative; a kind of either you are 'in' or you are 'out' situation. In the other type of neighbourhood the exact location is of less importance. In this paper we will elaborate on how urban centrality is related to the configurative properties and discuss the difference in various urban morphology patterns. We will discuss this as a general phenomenon as many cities today implement strategies with the aim to revitalise and develop new urban centres, and elaborate on how 'urbanity' can be encouraged extending and nuancing the question from 'lively places' to concepts that incorporate how instances of such urbanity interact with and depend on context. To give concretion we refer to the proposal for new Comprehensive Plan for Stockholm (2016), and the proposal for a new Regional Development Plan for Stockholm (2016). These planning documents emphasise the social importance of subcentres and connecting urban paths, argued to play important roles to decrease segregation, connect a fragmented urban landscape and reach more equal living conditions. These centres are not only business or commercial centres; they should also function as social arenas, facilitating interplay between the citizens and between different social groups.

Seen from a configurative perspective the two different situations described above are argued to correspond to different configurative properties. They may be described as two types of urban structures: the hierarchical tree structure and the (deformed) grid structure (Klarqvist 1995; Hillier 1996). These structures are related to different distributions of centrality (see Hillier, 2003) which are influencing aspects like freedom and control. As a result, one may expect different types of use and activities, and they have different implications for social life (Hillier & Hanson 1984; Hanson & Hillier 1987). However, there is a possibility to be more nuanced in the analyses of urban networks; the local properties are influenced by the relatedness of the street network both on the local level in combination with properties on the city level (Peponis 2008; Hillier 2012).

The aim is to increase the understanding of how urban form can generate and sustain urban centres as well as embed them in, or distinguish them from their context. The interest lies not only in how centres and paths develop into nodes for communication or nodes for public and commercial service, but also in their social implications such as urban life, walking behaviour, and possibilities to partake of societal resources including commercial, social and other services but also public spaces and other people. The paper uses the discussion of 'field conditions' and the concepts of 'points' and 'lines' drawing from Stan Allen (1999) and John McMorrough (2001). These concepts will be used to read and interpret urban configuration with the aim to capture specific characteristics of centres of relevance for urban life and for what living conditions are created in different parts of the city. We will discuss urban centrality in relation to the goals that the municipality and the region formulate that are about connecting and integrating the city spatially as well as developing new subcentres. The paper concludes that the development of urban centrality is a process related to configuration and that attractions, flows as well as accessibility works within conditions set out by the configurative properties inherent in urban form.

2. URBAN CENTRES – SUBCENTRES

The city and the region of Stockholm is growing rapidly¹. High urban drift and population increase has resulted in a severe housing shortage (Länsstyrelsen 2016). Planning practice has for long been focused upon expansion and densification simultaneously, and a strategy to meet this expansion has been to develop and create new sub centres in order to distribute service, resources and urbanity as well as bring relief to the inner city that is put under pressure.

In the context of these planning and design processes, urban subcentres can be understood as descriptions of phenomena or as abstractions or symbols for a certain function in a larger context (the city or the region). Most often, an urban centre could be identified as a place of concentrated non-residential activities. During the post-war development in Stockholm typically associated with either high population density, communication network nodes, or concentrations of job opportunities (Granfelt, 1968). It is also in the 20th century the notion of 'a centre' as a specific and separate unit becomes dominant, in a similar type of correspondence-thinking as 'the neighbourhood' (Hanson & Hillier, 1987). However, the concept of 'centre' within architecture and urban design is as Allen (1999) highlights rather different from its more precise definition within physics: it is a kind of double meaning; both in a symbolic sense and in that it should be perceived as a centre in terms of their urban surroundings. In planning documents – comprehensive plans or regional plans – the concepts function as abstract descriptions (compare with 'abstract space', Lefebvre 1991). However, as these attributes are to be applied in practice, a more nuanced understanding is necessary for what these nodes in reality are and how urban form in fact can create such urban nodes, centres and paths, an understanding that is closer to how such places function and may be perceived in daily life (compare with Lefebvre's 'lived space'). Strategies to develop subcentres are often related to ideas about attractive complements to the city/regional core with the argument to provide citizens outside the urban core with a diversified service supply and to counteract urban sprawl (TMR 2013).

In the Stockholm Comprehensive Plan (2010) nine urban subcentres are identified with related and interconnected urban paths. In the new proposal (2016) the subcentres are less prominent but ideas about connecting the fragmented city and linking different districts/neighbourhoods remains central: The plan proposes a number of urban paths and boulevards. The intention is to create a more connected, walkable city that eases social relations and increases access to urban resources which is believed to result in a more socially sustainable city. Three of the subcentres from the previous plan remain in the new proposal and furthermore includes the whole neighbourhoods where these centres are located. Two of them correspond with the eight regional subcentres in the Regional Plan; Skärholmen and *Kista*. In the translation to implementation of these proposals we argue that there are tendencies to translate these 'nodes' and 'links' in the abstract level to 'points' and 'lines' in the concrete architectural solutions, while the rhetoric rather makes claims better related to 'fields'.

3. CONNECTING THE CITY – CONNECTING PEOPLE

According to the Comprehensive Plan (2016), one aim is to avoid the development of mono-functional housing areas (suburbia). The strategy aims to counteract segregation and to create more equal living conditions, as residential segregation continues to have a firm hold on the city and the region. There is an increasing socio-economic polarization in spite of political goals advocating increased social integration (Andersson 2013). Segregation is however not limited to residential segregation, in addition there is a spatial separation of social groups as a result of how the citizens use the city in their daily life (e.g. Legeby, 2013); there is a separation in terms of functions as well as in terms of activities (Franzén 2009). To a certain degree this is the result of how our cities are organized spatially, the spatial relations that the built environment creates, both between neighbourhoods and between people (Hanson 2000; Vaughan 2007; Hanson & Zako 2007; Legeby & Marcus 2011; Legeby 2013; Netto et al., 2016). Access to different resources in the city, such as public and commercial service or to social networks, look very different in different parts of the city, which contributes to increased segregation.

1 The region has 2.2 million inhabitants and is expecting 2.6 million by 2030. (Länsstyrelsen 2016).

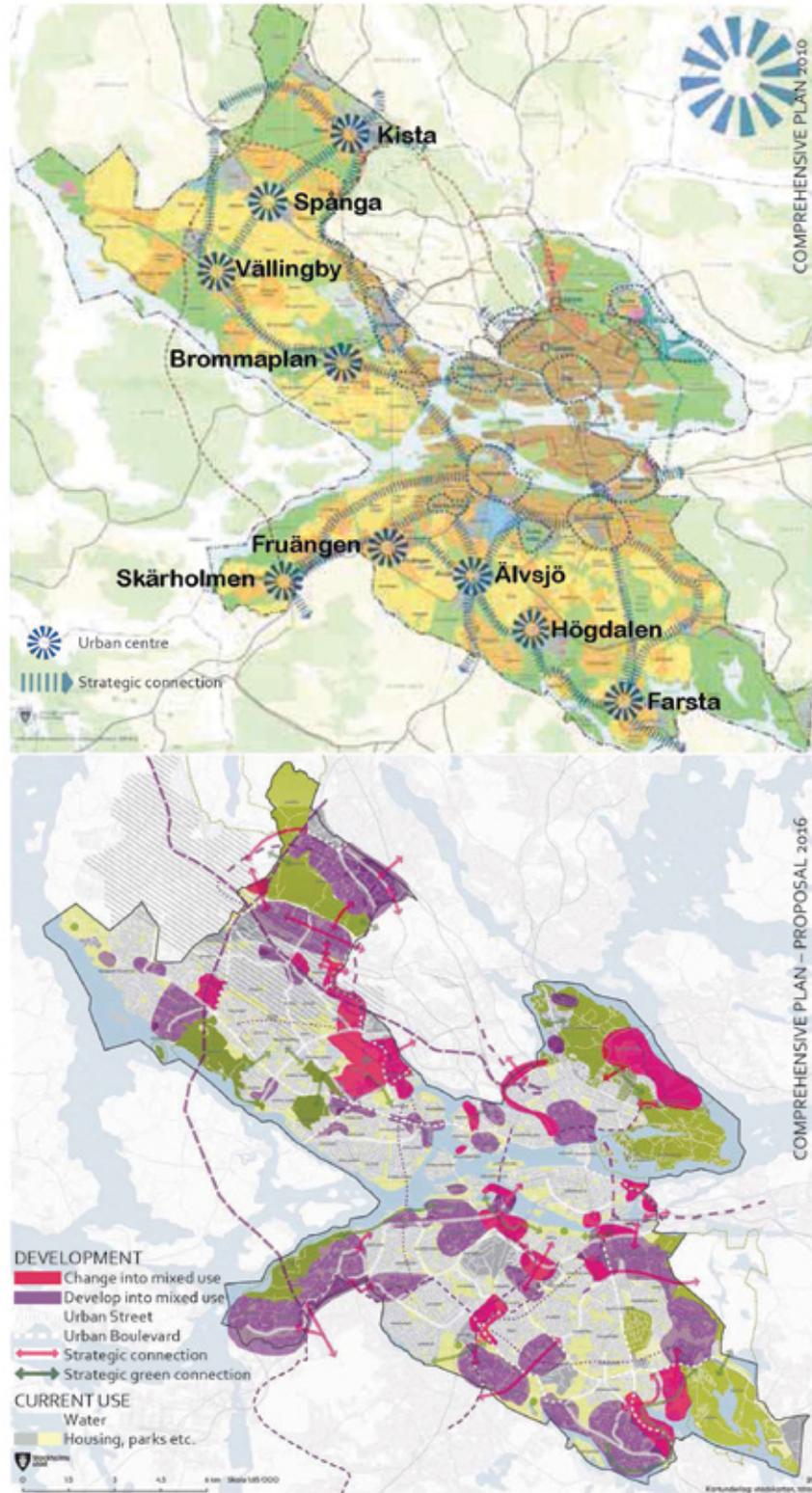


Figure 1 - Stockholm Comprehensive Plan; 2010 and 2016.

Zukin (1995) argues that those social groups visible in the city and that share public space can participate in the ongoing negotiations about societal norms and attitudes. In a similar line of reasoning, Young (1996) argues that strong separation between social groups may lead to impaired understanding of 'the other' and other people's life conditions as well as reduced trust. In extension, limited exchange between citizens and between different groups in society, has negative effects in general but is especially disadvantageous for groups or individuals with few recourses (Franzen, 2001; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2001). Urban form, through the configurational properties and spatial organization, has a very direct impact on the distribution of resources and the distribution of societal functions. A kind of landscape of collective resources that takes very long time to change (Legeby et al., 2016a; 2016b).

4. URBAN FORM, CENTRALITY AND 'LOCATION'

The outset for our discussion of the concepts of point, line and field is that the character of individual places are largely defined by their relation to the surrounding spaces, and that this heavily affects social life and affordances, as is set out already by Hillier and Hanson in 1984. For our current investigation, it is not only a question of centrality of individual spaces, but how this relates to local and global context. We draw from how Vaughan et al. (2010) have specifically studied centrality patterns in suburban centres and emphasized the social importance of the high street, and on more abstracted and conceptually, Hillier et al.'s (2012) comprehensive study comparing patterns of urban centrality in different cities, and Marcus' concept of *spatial capital* as created through how configuration of urban form interrelates with how property structure is organised (Marcus 2010). We further relate to earlier studies of Stockholm, linking spatial properties to higher inflow of non-locals and higher urban life-intensity (Legeby 2013; Choi 2015). The underlying principle of this discussion is that an understanding of how urban spaces provides a potential for co-presence is essential in order to reach the goals that are presented in the Comprehensive Plan (2016, 20-23,52) about creating meeting places or social arenas. Urban environments provide possibilities as well as restrictions that influence movement flows and peoples' appropriation of space. As de Certeau argues:

"...a spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities [...] then the walker actualizes some of these possibilities. In that way, he makes them exist as well as emerge." (1984, 98).

In planning documents on the comprehensive level subcentres as well as paths and links are mostly represented in an abstract way. The intent is to not be very precise but to show intentions and illustrate strategies. But when it comes to *implementation* it is important that we understand what urban design interventions respond to these abstractions. Here, we will discuss how this relates to configurational properties and concepts developed by Stan Allen (1999) and John McMorrough (2001) including 'point', 'line', and 'field'. We argue that the understanding of these phenomena can inform and contribute to the understanding of what kind of design interventions may have the ability to support the development of subcentres in Stockholm in a way that also provide them with a potential to be a social arena.

Building on Allen's work, McMorrough (2001) uses the concepts 'point', 'line' and 'field' in a more concrete way in relation to shopping:

"[...] – where the shop (or boutique) represents the basic unit of shopping, or point; the mall (and its antecedents, the arcade and stoa) represents the linear accumulation of shopping points; and the department store or big box retailing, for example represents the extrusion of the shop/point in all directions into a field, or plane, of consumption." (2001, 195-198).

This specific understanding can be transferred to a wider range of scales and be applied to a discussion on urban centres. For this purpose, we will go through the concepts more thoroughly in how they are interpreted specifically for our discussion.

4.1 POINT

A point in an urban setting is something that one can move to and from but that only to a limited extent produces movement flows in its proximity. Very few flows pass through the point centre; it tends to be either a *destination* or an *origin*. A point can be a single attraction but appear in different scales; one single business, a neighbourhood square or a shopping mall. Urban life may emerge at these kind of places but the tendency is that this only to a limited extent generates movement to the neighbourhood/district where it's located (McMorrough 2001). For example, visitors to the subcentres in Skärholmen and Farsta interact to a limited extent with the district at large. Neither the interface with the surrounding streets nor their configuration encourage different types of activities in the proximity of the centre, rather, only a couple of blocks away land use is mono-functional and dominated by housing. As 'points' concentrate urban life to the point itself and are weak in producing urbanity in the neighbourhood as a whole, conditioning co-presence and the possibilities for different social groups to share public space. In such an understanding 'points' are created not only by boundaries or functional restrictions, but importantly for our argument, also when configuration creates delimitations between one and the other. McMorrough (2001, 198) argues that urbanity rather *decreases* as privatization increases for example in shopping environments. Hence, aspects of control and freedom (Markus 1993) are at play as well, where 'point' phenomena often provides situations of high control and low degree of freedom.

4.2 LINE

According to McMorrough (2001) lines are paths (or streets) that can be described as an element with a stretched linearity. A line is not a simple connector *between* two points; rather lines connect and aggregates points along a certain stretch. Movement flows occur between points but which point that is origin or destination is blurred. Depending on the distribution of the points along such line, flows of different intensity and character emerge. In sequences where route patterns overlap exchange can take place; an active or passive exchange, direct or indirect, as for example by reading a situation from other people's behaviour (de Certeau, 1984). Goffman (1963) introduces focused and unfocused interaction and Koch et al. (2012) describe primary and secondary benefits that emerge as a result of co-presence and interaction. Lines offer such potentials in how it organises movement and other activities in public space to foster encounters in the process of other activities, such as between one shop and the other, or day-care and home.

4.3 FIELD

When lines that individually are connected with points are aggregating into a cluster Stan Allen (1999) calls this a 'field condition'. Together, these lines generate flows and possibilities. He argues that a field condition is capable of unifying diverse elements while respecting the identity of each:

"Field conditions are bottom-up phenomena, defined not by overarching geometrical schemas but by intricate local connections. Interval, repetition, and seriality are key concepts. Form matters, but not so much the forms of things as the forms between things." (1999, 92).

Allen emphasizes the relations between things and translated to urban street structures 'field conditions' may appear as a structure that is continuous with gradual shifts of integration, and where interconnectedness reaches large portions of the area. Streets that attract a larger share of movement flows are streets that are used while moving between other lines and points. However, in close proximity from these, more quiet streets appear; providing a kind of back street or alley character. Hence, field conditions create and combine a *diversity of different* locations within a limited area, something that may be compared to what Marcus refers to as *spatial capacity* (2010). The location of points (origin/destination) will in fields be blurred and rather be characterized by a continuity of possible destinations/goal points, whereupon according to Allen (1999) focus moves from the individual to the collective, or from object to

field. He emphasizes that fields are created in a bottom-up process and that they are dependent on the configurative relations, in line with how Hillier and Hanson argue (1984, ch.1). One can say that all design components together create a kind of unity of diversity. It is a possibility for a gradual shift of functions and thereby a more nuanced set of options for walking, living and using. Points act quite conversely where the sharp boundaries of points allow for a separation in for example the shopping centre and the housing area.

Additionally, field configurations are inherently expandable (Allen, 1999). This implies that since a field can grow (or shrink) piecemeal it holds affordance for change; it becomes flexible for economic and social shifts (Granfelt, 1968).

The configurative properties that corresponds to 'field' are characterized by an aggregation of lines with high integration values however with variations. Such structures provide several equivalent or alternative routes through the area, but are not confined to 'grids' or other specific geometrical forms. Field phenomena rarely appear in hierarchal urban structures, which are prevalent in Stockholm's urban landscape, e.g. areas designed according to the neighbourhood unit model. These areas resist the idea of connecting the city, and creating continuity of the urban fabric will not be solved only by single connectors (e.g. urban path/boulevard). Moreover, in tree structures, the catchment area tends to be limited and the spatial reach narrows down. Often the interface towards neighbouring areas is ruptured (Legeby 2013, Legeby et al. 2015). Such structures provide fewer alternatives for choosing a route, increasing control and predictability (Koch, 2016; Markus, 1993). *How* people move in these areas is found to correspond to the different configurative properties; in 'field' configurations (e.g. SoFo) there is a larger share of so called social walking, while in typical 'line' configurations (e.g. Hökarängen) utilitarian walking behaviour is more prominent (Choi 2015).

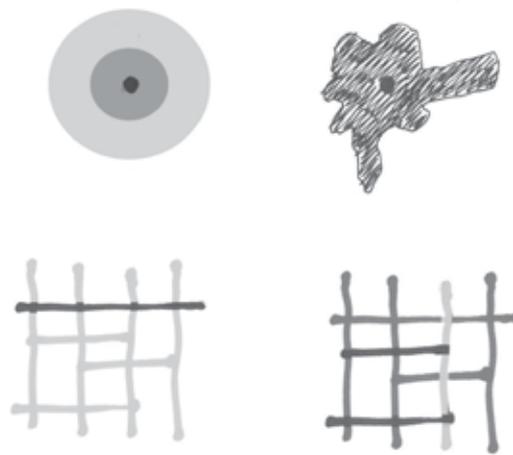


Figure 2 - Point-line-field-conditions.

5. EMPIRICAL APPLICATIONS

To develop these concepts towards concrete applications, we will analyse configuration and catchment areas, where catchment area is understood as spatial reach and accessible population around the centres. The analyses operate through an axial map, where distances are measured along the axial lines and largely correspond to walking distances in the urban fabric. The selection of analyses showed here include 1) configurative analysis, 2) population density in the catchment area, 3) spatial catchment area (topological reach), and 4) an example of access to amenities.

5.1 CONFIGURATIVE ANALYSIS

The integration analysis describe three scale levels; local (radius 6), a mid-level (radius 16), and a city level (radius 30)². By highlighting the most integrated lines at each scale level the pattern that appears illustrates whether integration cores take on point, line or field characteristics. At large, the centrality distributes from the city core in two directions; to the south and to the north-west. The south-sector is highly integrated and largely interconnected, argued to hold a field condition (at r30 and r16) but on a local level fragmentation emerges. The south-west part of the city, where *Skärholmen centre* is located, is at large weakly integrated to the high integration sector. However, on the mid-scale level, a kind of field pattern emerges in the neighbourhood but without being integrated in its surrounding; meaning that this field in practice acts as a point. *Farsta centre* is located in the extension of this sector but beyond where centrality reaches. Streets in the neighbourhood features a kind of line characteristics but this linearity acts locally and connections to neighbouring areas are interrupted. *Kista centre* is outside of high integration core (city level) and weakly connected to the linearity that exists in the district where it's located. Thus, urban form hinders centrality to distribute both west and north from *Kista* centre with the result that movement between the centre and the district is not encouraged by the built environment.



Figure 3 - High values: integration radius 6.

² The radii chosen are selected since they are found to be relevant in Stockholm for aspects related to co-presence in public space in terms of intensity and the mix of locals and non-locals (Legeby 2013).



Figure 4 - High values: integration radius 16.



Figure 5 - High values: integration radius 30.

5.2 POPULATION IN THE CATCHMENT AREA

How many people live and work around the subcentres reveals the density in their respective area. In some planning traditions such density is what defines a centre; either places that reach a high density of workplaces or a high population density beside aspects of communications (Granfelt, 1968). In this analysis a 3-kilometre distance is used³ and while *Skärholmen* and *Farsta* hold rather similar densities *Kista* proves to have much higher numbers both in terms of residents and working population.

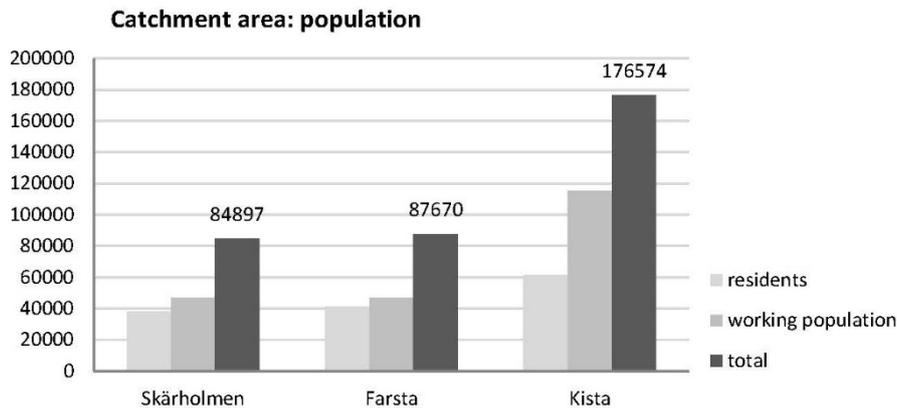


Figure 6 - Access to population from each centre.

5.3 SPATIAL CATCHMENT AREA

The catchment area of the subcentres is analysed by topological reach since that highlights the properties of urban form (6-10-16-30-step distances). The 6-axial-step-reach shows that *Skärholmen* expands to the west, but still, it reaches just about the neighbouring centre *Vårberg* about one kilometre away. In other directions the structure is more fragmented and there is a lack of linearity that reaches out to the surroundings. The catchment area of *Farsta* has a clear concentric shape and lack linearity that reaches out to the surroundings. It is disconnected to the high centrality stretch that reaches out from the city core. *Kista* has a catchment area that clearly stretches out towards east, where the business/office area is located but is much weaker to the north where housing dominates. A spatial segregation between working places and housing do not foster interplay, rather, the configurative properties inhibit a mix of local residents and non-locals visiting the mall.

In these three cases it is shown that the interface towards neighbouring areas is ruptured which is clearly obstructive for the development of the subcentre but especially for the neighbourhoods at large. This leaves the subcentres/areas in a segregated position that do not use the latent potential that the closest catchment area could give. Interventions in the urban structure in critical locations could change the situation dramatically so that the context could support the emergence of the subcentre rather than just happen to be located side by side.

3 Data of the population/workplaces at the address point level and distance measured as walking distance through the street network accessible for pedestrians.



Figure 7 - Spatial catchment area. Skärholmen has a limited catchment area and the spatial relation to Vårberg to the west turns out to be weak. From *Kista* lines stretch out, stronger to the north than to the south. Farsta centre is rather weakly integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods Hökarängen, Sköndal and Farsta Strand.

5.4 HOW UNEQUAL LIVING CONDITIONS PLAY OUT

Since segregation is closely related to unequal living conditions there is a need to describe how inequalities play out in different urban layouts. Access to resources is dependent on land use (location *in* space) but also configurational properties (*of* space) that in a combined analysis reveals distribution *through* space. Urban centres are strongly related to commercial services but as a way of moving focus from commercial to public service we here present an analysis of streets that connect a selection of public services; namely libraries, facilities for culture schools and community facilities. The map illustrates where continuities as well as fragmentation appears in the urban fabric. This analysis reveals how unequal living conditions play out in the city where some paths and neighbourhoods are characterised by high access and others by absence of amenities. Some areas are much favoured while others more or less lack streets where this service is exposed or accessible. It can also be seen how in some areas the accessibility spreads out into fields, while in others they appear aggregated into lines, and in yet others more or less as points.

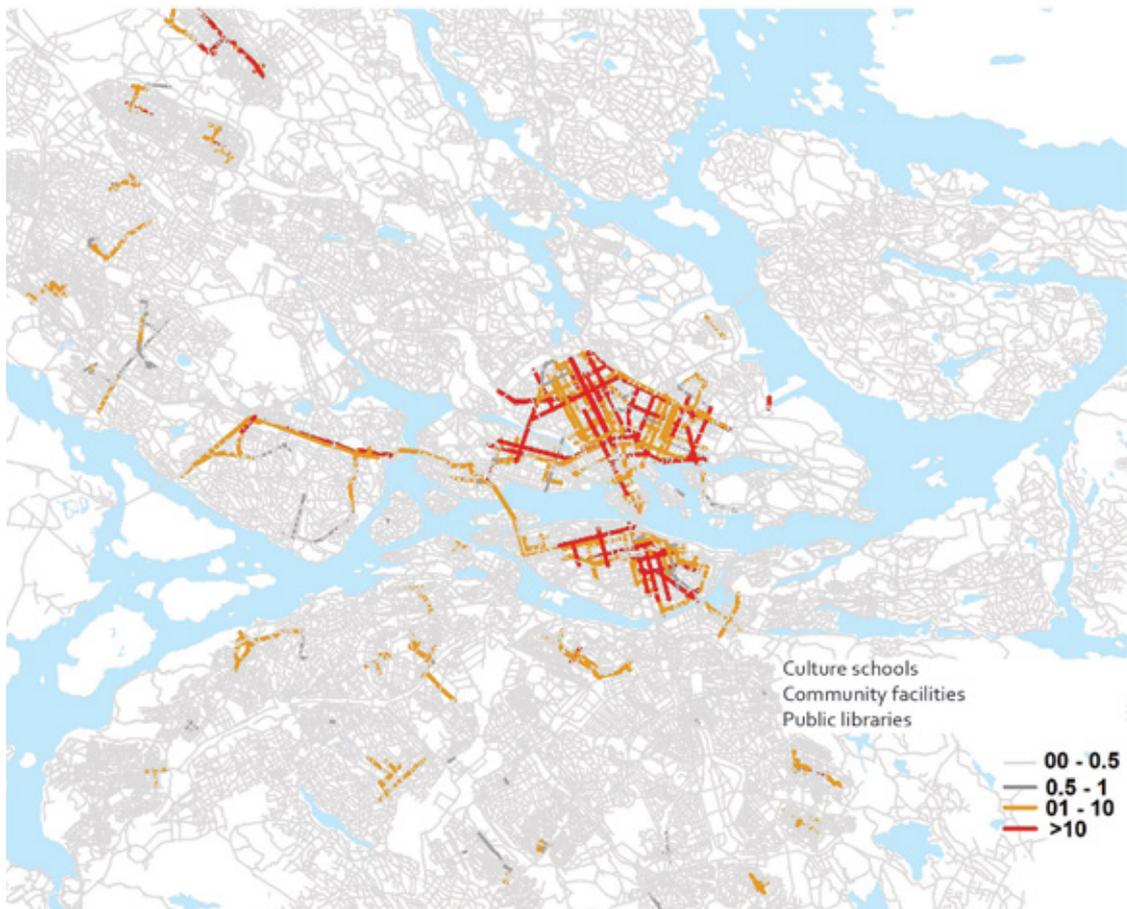


Figure 8 - Analysis (attraction betweenness in PST) illustrating the spatial relations between public institutions and amenities (i.e. how many amenities are found within a radius of 280° from each segment; facilities for culture, facilities for assembling, and public libraries.

6. CONCLUDING DISUSSION

This paper shows that a point-line-field approach may be combined with and supported by space syntax theory and configurative analysis. A set of different analyses contribute to identify where phenomena of points-lines-fields appear in a city and increases the understanding of how urban form in neighbourhoods may contribute to the emergence of subcentres and to integrate fragmented parts of the city.

We argue, that configurative analyses – revealing whether places hold the characteristics from points, lines or fields – inform practice in where and how to invest in a constructive and bottom-up way. It reveals the possibilities and the restrictions for various uses and social processes that public space offer for its users; hence, affordances are identified. Such understanding can help shift the question in both practice and research from particular elements (square, street, segment, or building) towards an approach that incorporates contexts and systems. It further allows an approach where variations in 'liveliness' or 'centrality' are coherent, conceptual parts of the intervention rather than an issue or left unaddressed. Such an approach allows better for making sure that the positive contributions of centres can integrate with its surroundings instead of being confined to a particular street or place, and also that there is affordance for dynamic growth and shrinking processes of a variety of activities. It can be noted that a lot of planning today is operating with a 'point'-thinking (possible scattered points), or at best a 'line'-thinking (e.g. 'place-making-initiatives'; Gehl, 2010). Ironically, shopping initially borrowed features from the city and according to McMorrough (2001, 194): "Through an evolving series of processes, shopping has come to constitute urbanity" (2001, 194).

To reiterate: 'points' are not very efficient in creating urban life outside of itself, in a neighbourhood or in a district. Points instead tend to draw activities away from the surroundings, leaving streets in the proximity rather quiet. Hence, subcentres with a point-logic may provide service and enables access to certain amenities but is weaker in providing spaces for interplay or exchange. Subcentres with a line-logic do not concentrate movement as strongly as a 'point' does and the linearity distributes access to certain amenities and services more efficiently to its surrounding. An advantageous effect with the 'line' compared to the 'point' is that the attraction of each individual point decrease in importance, rather, the points collectively builds up an attraction that is at play. This opens for a larger variation of actors; also less strong actors/businesses are able to establish in a favourable location. However, the constraints of the lines lie in their linearity; as McMorrough (2001) points out, the affordance for variety and dynamic adaption is much greater in a field, and such variance and adaption, we argue, are important for a diverse but integrated society. A sharp non-connecting interface to the neighbouring areas has a segregating effect rather than a linking effect that limits the social interplay locally. Such fragmentation is similar to what Peponis et al. (1997, 344) highlight in the reasoning around what discourages traverse circulation and difficulties in understanding a larger scale based on urban organisation locally. The assumption that 'areas' are created by well-defined boundaries has been questioned within space syntax theory and instead it is found that centrality that pervades at different scales is more likely to support what Peponis et al. call 'area-sation' (1997). Also emphasised by Hillier (1996) is that the breaking of the interface between inhabitants and strangers corresponds to 'disurbanism' and is related to impaired potential for 'liveliness'. In line with this, Hanson argues that 'estate morphologies' (weakly spatially integrated in its surroundings, meaning no line nor field conditions) implies a ruptured interface at many levels, both spatially and socially (Hanson 2000, 114, 117). 'Points' appear as aggregations in the urban fabric but are weakly integrated in its context with the effect of limit co-presence to these nodes and with poor or no 'spill-over-effect' to its surroundings. This does not only concern itself with amount of co-presence, however, but with who might be co-present with whom, where, and who might visit which part of the city. Two 'lively points' may be more segregating than one 'calm field'. This taken together appears to be an unfavourable situation for a city that strives to connect the city and its citizens and decrease fragmentation, both from a spatial and a social perspective. Our investigation shows that it is possible to elucidate where areas or centres act as points, lines and fields by careful configurational analysis, instead of being confined to observable boundaries or typological interpretations.

We argue that in order to reach the social goals formulated by the city and the region 'field conditions' are the most supportive. Field conditions provide both lively and quiet streets in close proximity and enable social relations to be less controlled and fields are likely to encourage a larger variation of everyday practices. Field conditions hence create non-correspondences argued to encourage a mixing of categories locally (Hanson & Hillier 1987). Ignorance towards the complex contextual conditions that configurative properties make visible, risk to mislead investments or interventions may be ineffective. We furthermore argue that a concept such as 'field' is able to respond to morphological and social character without reducing the question to a simplified understanding of geometric typologies. We conclude that (1) 'Liveliness' and distribution of liveliness is affected by how centrality is configurationally characterised, which (2) sets conditions for social life and activity including how liveliness can emerge but also how other social arenas and activities can find their place.

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