FINDINGS THROUGH FRAGMENTATION
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FRAGMENTATION

Lövholmen/Stockholm
Sofia Ekberg
Konstfack 2018
“And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don’t believe in magic will never find it.”

*Roald Dahl*
INTRODUCTION

Findings through fragmentations

Konstfack 2017/2018

Stockholm, as so many other places in the world, has a history of rebuilding parts of the city by wiping away what was there before. By tearing down parts of the city to make place for new buildings a ‘total design’ and a ‘total architecture’ has been applied to sites. This concept was advocated by the modernist Walter Gropius and Bruno Taut in the 1920’s that suggested a new architecture that would evolve from a ‘total work of art’. In Gropius quote “An architect or planner worth the name must have a very broad and comprehensive vision indeed to achieve a true synthesis of a future community. This we might call ‘total architecture” he was pointing at how architecture needs to be an artificial system which is the opposite of what derives from nature.1

In 1978, Cornell University Professors Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter wrote a text for their architectural research on the postwar city entitled ‘Collage City’. The authors discuss in their text urbanism and utopian ideas and the understanding of the continuous fabric of a city which criticizes the modernist city planning.

The reaction against the ‘single-idea’ approach proposes an idea that urban design must be considered through fragmentation, the usage of ‘bricolage’ as a method of interpreting and create functioning network of pocket utopias. A vision of a combination between the modern and traditional, fantasy and real where the city is allowed to create itself, to read itself and to form its own meaning.2

A fragment derives from a greater whole and is a piece of debris. When looking closely at this definition a fragment without it’s context will be read as ‘incomplete’ and subordinate to the completed it is extracted from. Architectural fragments have a power of resisting such expected unity and can be read into an alternative whole of none. Memories are constantly edited and organized by our minds and our view of the past is distorted and highly selective. And just like fragments it is important when it comes to making comments about the past as well as the present.

Architecture is an obvious remnant of a collective past and is a fragment from a former life and a different time. This unique relationship between what’s new and old is a very powerful opportunity. If memory is defined in a dictionary as ‘The faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information’ 3 then the role architecture comes to play is the prop for our collective and individual memories where it represents past events and people.

This thesis project will take a starting point in the concept of fragmentation and collecting memories in a site that is going to be teared down.

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1 Walter Gropius, ‘The Scope of Total Architecture’, 1955 Pg. 184
2 Eamonn Canniffe, ‘Colin Rowe (1920-99) and Fred Koetter: Collage City’, Manchester School of Architecture Blog, 26 April 2010, Read 2018.03.16
3 Memory, Oxford dictionary, Retrieved May 24, 2018 from en.oxforddictionaries.com
The fast growing city of Stockholm has reached one of the last islets outside of the city center to be reconstructed. Lövholmen is one of the few industry areas still existing in the city and has for over a 100 years produced industrial products. By picking this particular site I got interested in the way it is disconnected from the area surrounding it, existing mainly of dwellings but also of offices and a school. The industrial architecture that give tone to a certain kind of buildings and spaces belongs in this case to their users, the people working there. The area consisting of industries connected to the harbour is closed off and not public. This means that interior spaces (both between buildings and their inside) will get lost. I would like to study fragments of these spaces to find the qualities of the non visible.

Fragmere (Latin) meaning is ‘to break’, a fragment is a piece of debris and it always retains the mark of the whole.

Studying fragments from this point of view they become incomplete and subordinate to the whole that completes them. As often as architectural fragments lend themselves to this subordination they can be read as something unique, something that speaks for itself. Their outer contours suggests a different context or none at all. The expected unity is forgotten and they evolve into something new.

I want to focus my research around the interior and exterior spaces in Lövholmen and by using different methods try to find what is not displayed. For this I will focus on the following questions:

- How can the methods of fragmenting tell a story of a place?
- What narratives can be found on an existing site studying what’s already there?

By using different methods of dissecting the site in Lövholmen I wish to connect the notion of fragment to the storytelling of space, the representation of memories and past narratives. When choosing significant buildings from the site and using different techniques to collect interesting material I will work with keywords that communicates the translation between the work of artists that has inspired me through my studies;

- Collecting traces
  A collection of drawings and findings at the site
- Absence and memory
  Collecting traces by casting
- Transfiguration of the commonplace
  Traces and unfolding of space
- Recurrent dream spaces
  Splitting, extracting mass

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4 J Lööf, 'Bevarande av identitet vid exploatering i Stockholm', 10.05.2014
ATLAS

Nr.1
collecting traces

An Atlas will be constructed early in the process including both physical and intangible aspects of the site - clues for how to illuminate, transform and connect physical building elements as well as historical stories. The atlas will use similar mapping techniques as the ones found in Learning from Las Vegas written by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown och Steven Izenour in 1972.  

6 Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, Robert Venturi, ‘Learning from Las Vegas’, 1972
Rachel Whiteread

Rachel Whiteread (1963) is an English artist who focuses her work around sculptures which many times are made by castings of our everyday objects. The technique is a translation from negative space into solid form and she often uses spaces around or within furniture or architecture. For three decades, she has discovered the inside out of life and space surrounding it. Her work covers the smallest details as well as the monumental. In 1993 she managed to cast an interior of an entire house. The material she uses can be anything from plaster, resin, concrete, rubber or metal or even papier-mache. The rules of her work are simple and repetitive. Her work talks about findings and refers to the past as for example with her piece 'House' from 1993 where the inside out of a building becomes a ghost and a sculptured memory of its lost inhabitants.7

7 Laura Cumming, 'Rachel Whiteread review - accentuate the negative', The Guardian, 17 September 2017, Read 2018.03.18
Clay Ketter

Clay Ketter (1961) is an American artist based in Sweden, his work can be defined at the borderland of architecture, sculpture and painting. Using elements from our everyday life Ketter lets his art have double references, relating both to art and to ongoing life. Sven-Olov Wallenstein describes Ketter’s work in his article The Art of Surfaces as ‘a transfiguration of the commonplace’. The variation in media in his art pieces includes painting, photography and sculpture with concise compositions and carefully shifts of colour. In his series ‘Anywhereville’ a huge assemblage is created with inspiration of the classical Lundy-dollhouses. The doll houses are deconstructed and folded out on a surface creating a relief and a painting, places beside each other, as on a street, where some of them are burnt. The catastrophe is present and Ketter refers to the inhabited fear of humans and the vulnerability. The same theme appears in the series ‘Gulf Cost Slabs’ from 2006. Here the devastation from the storm Katrina are shown in a series of photographs taken from above showing the remaining traces of an architecture once standing there.  

8 Sven-Olov Wallenstein, *The Art of Surfaces* Clay Ketter, Moderna Museet (exhib.cat) 2009
most famous for his work in the 70’s. After studied architecture a fascination for the subjects complicated relationship to private and public space, urban development and decay was formed. This he started to investigate by slicing abandoned buildings sculpturing void and cracks to reveal the authority of urban enclosure. In his work ‘Conical Intersect’, which was a contribution to the Paris Biennale in 1975, he sought to criticize the urban gentrification. By boring a tornado shaped hole in a 45-degree angle through the building exiting through the roof a view was created of a void showing the building’s internal skeleton. Another similar project was ‘Office Baroque’ made in a five-story Antwerp office building. With inspiration from the marks of a teacup on a drawing Matta-Clark cut through the floors creating an organically shaped intersection, describing it himself as ‘a walk through a panoramic arabesque.’

9 Nancy Spector, ‘Conical Intersect’, Guggenheim collection online, Read 2018.03.18
To be aware of history is very important when understanding the connection between architecture and memory. With this comes the important theoretical point that urban planning both manifest and materialises ideology. By building based on ideology, the structure of life that the city provide becomes fundamental and inescapable. Architecture becomes the frame of reference and the context for the past, something that the notion of memory is dependent on.

The reading of a place and the layering of history needs to be studied from several perspectives. Lövholmen was evolving as an industrial site in the late 19th century which makes it important to talk about the different orientations looking back 150 years of design proposals and reactions. For this project I will discuss four general directions, analyzed from the different ideas and ideologies of city planning.

The analysis will start with what I call the first paradigm, the compact city of the 19th century with integration of functions in local areas. Continuing with the early 20th century and the second paradigm which I call the dispersed city, where industries were moved out from the city center. The third paradigm as I see it is a modernist city planning, the utopian city, where functions were separated and spread out. The fourth paradigm is the complex concept of postmodernism, the city of retrospection, the idea of looking back at history and recreating concepts of the past.

These four city planning paradigms will be the base for my discussion which I will end with my own analysis of Lövholmen.

Albert Lindhagen studied his work, and elaborated a similar plan for Stockholm in 1866. He also provided general building regulations as a module for spatial comfort, something that still mark cities in Sweden today. The densification strategy of the compact city organized by a conceptualized grid at this time still permitted an organic sprawl of the functions of a city. The compact city of the 19th century is recognized by the collection of functions in one area, creating a mixed environment.
THE DISPERSED CITY

Nr.2

The paradigms of city planning

The dispersed city, mark the time of *The dispersed city*, mark the time of the early 20th century and is the paradigm of the reorganisation of functions of the by that time modern city. In Le Corbusier's ideal plan, the early manifest of modern planning the inhabitants were also divided into categories, separating different dwelling types and, as a consequence, social groups into distinct units. Rules were made to clean up the inner part of the cities from the contaminated industries and production was moved outside of the city borders, where the rules of the city did not apply. 13

The remodulation of the city drawn by Lindhagen became extremely expensive and the strict grid was abandoned in exchange for a more artistic and loose city plan with exploitation on un-built land. To sustain the flow of population that kept moving into the cities parts of the city became divided into different areas of dwelling, industries and recreation. Trams were added to the system of infrastructure and it became possible to build areas to dwell and work outside of the city center. 14

Industrial areas in Stockholm were Lövholmen, Hjorthagen, Minneberg and Slakthusområdet, they were created outside of the city center to focus the production where it could be built in rural countryside on virgin land. Areas in the city were planned and built in connection to the industry, the working class started to dwell in these regions that is known as Gröndal, Aspudden, Midsommarkransen, Djursholm and Saltsjöbaden. 15

13 Emily Badger, *The Evolution of Urban Planning in 10 Diagrams*, Citylab 09.11.2012, read 01.05.2018

14 Exploitations of the industrial breakthrough in Sweden and the modulation of the city grid is discussed in the book *Den ekonomiska staden* by Hossein Sheiban

THE UTOPIAN CITY

Nr.3

The paradigms of city planning

The utopian city, belongs to the modernist movement that began to surface in urban planning in the 1920’s. This paradigm opted for the mechanization of the city and made clear principles around zoning where functions were separated in living, working and recreation. Architects got big roles in ruling what parts of old cities were not worth saving and a type of sanitizing became something that they thought necessary. Keywords such as progressivism, anti-historicism and social responsibilities were important where the ideal was for form to follow function. This new modern utopian city, with it’s simple and non-decorative architecture and city planning aimed for and believed in that strict design principles could change the world and make it a better place. 16

As art historian Christian Björk stated in his article ‘The Role of Parks in Segregated Stockholm’ a zoning system with a separation of social functions was created in Stockholm at this time. Principles that was laid out by Le Corbusier in his Athens Charter manifesto became an international reference point for urban planning. “The dwellings were composed of high-rise, free-standing buildings among wide green spaces; the through traffic was placed outside each function, and recreation was placed separate from residential zones in green areas and other neutral zones”. 17 Infrastructure was changing with the increasing usage of cars, Slussen was built and the bridges Västerbron and Tranebergsbron connected to dwellings built in a functionalist style located outside of the city center. Suburbs such as Vällingby and Farsta were internationally praised for their modernistic design.

15 The progress of urban construction and the city districts existing outside of the city center is presented in the book *Stockholm utanför tullarna* by Siv Bernhardsson m.f

16 Hayley A. Rowe, *The Rise and Fall of Modernist Architecture*, 2011, VOL. 3 NO. 04, read 04.08.2018

17 Christian Björk, *The role of parks in segregated Stockholm* Chp. ‘Public enquiries’, 2018
Lövholmen belongs to the paradigm of the dispersed city and is today one of few industrial remnants centrally located on an islet just outside the city border. Put in a context of urban history Lövholmen has for over a century been an important point for production of industrial material and had from the end of the 19th century a good connection with both the railway and the harbor. The industry was built on virgin land in a rural area and became the first industrial suburb outside of Stockholm partly self-government with rules that supported the industrial production.21 One important actor at the site has been Beckers that moved to the area in 1902. The company created a miniature society that grew, technologically evolved and changed depending on business cycles and the conjecture at large. The area has been classified by Stadsmuseet as interesting when it comes to important architectural qualities.22

18 City planning in the paradigm of modernism was seen as value free and technical, the postmodern paradigm no longer trusts the technocrat and sought for values in a broader context. A retrospection develops and an awareness of links to the past becomes important in the wish to produce a functioning network of pocket utopias. New principles for urban planning were set with a focus on densification of the already existing suburbs to avoid the increase of urban sprawl.

19 Fredrik Rosenhall, Chp.9 ‘Stadsplanering, rettuthållning och behovet av sociala konsekvensbeskrivningar’, s.188, 2010, read 05.21.2018

21 Stockholms stadsbyggnadskontor, Program för utveckling av Lövholmen, s.9, June 2011, read 01.05.2018
An industrial area, such as Lövholmen, located close to the city center carry the marks of time and history. It might not be clear why the understanding of the effect that memory has on architecture is important. Buildings carry meaning and the care of their fragments has an immense possibility of commenting the future as well as the past. By using different methods of dissecting the site I have wished to connect the notion of fragment to the storytelling of space, the representation of memories and past narratives. By fragmenting the site and care for their spatial expression I have wished to highlight the spatial qualities that I have found in the site. When a place or a building cannot be preserved the remainings can be valuable for a new building to be built and provide a powerful opportunity in the perception of memory and architecture.

The intention of this project is not simply to preserve but to problematize and comment on the way planning and building in Stockholm is performed today.
FINDINGS THROUGH FRAGMENTATION

Lövholmen
Stockholm

‘Findings through fragmentation’ started with a site analysis in the industrial area in Lövholmen Stockholm that is going through a reconstruction. Some buildings has been classified by Stockholm Stad as inhabiting a cultural worth from an artistic point of view.

Lövholmen has organically grown around the purpose of producing industrial materials. For many years it operated undisturbed outside of the city boarders but is today a part of the city. The site is privately owned and has an attractive placement close to the water. 23

This means that the buildings at the site is inaccessible and the site is closed off and not public. I found these rare buildings and their hidden spaces interesting and intriguing.

23 Ebba Rosencrantz, ‘Då rivs nedgångna huset i Gröndal’, Stockholm Direkt, 2016-08-01, read 01.05.2018

Lövholmen around 1955
SITE

Lövholmen
Stockholm

Lövholmen is one of the few industrial areas still existing in the city, parts of it in use and parts of it abandoned.

The area borders to Liljeholmsviken in the north and the lake trekanten in the south. In the east it reaches all the way to Södertäljevägen. Lövholmen is the last industrial area in central Stockholm and will be undergoing a radical transformation. Until 1860, Lövholmen was an unexplored area southwest of Stockholm. It was in that period the railway was constructed and Lövholmen got its own railway station. As a result of this various industries developed in the area. In the early 18th century many industries and companies had been established, among others AB Wilh. Becker and De Förenade Kolysyrefabrikernas AB, Stockholm Galvaniseringsfabrik AB and different workshops, weaving companies and timber yards. During the later 18th century the area developed, primarily the easter parts where housing and offices were established. Presently Lövholmen is dominated by Cemensta factory, Palmcrantzka fabriken, which now are being used by Färgfarbiken as well as the aboundade carbonic acid factory.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{24} J Lööf, ‘Bevarande av identitet vid exploatering i Stockholm’, 10.05.2014
SPACE IN BETWEEN
SITE
Lövholmen

SPACE IN BETWEEN
FRAGMENTED
Lövholmen
FENCED / CLOSED
Lövholmen

SPACE IN BETWEEN BUILDINGS
Lövholmen
VIEW OF SCALE
Lövholmen – 1:500
memory

noun
plural noun: memories
/ˈmɛm(ə)ri/
MEMORY

Method

Findings through fragmentations

Memories are constantly edited and organized by our minds and our view of the past is distorted and highly selective. And just like fragments it is important when it comes to making comments about the past as well as the present.
Etymologically, the word is drawn from the Latin *fragmere*, whose primary meaning is ‘to break.’ A fragment is thus a piece or, strictly, a piece of debris.
A fragment derives from a greater whole and is a piece of debris. When looking closely at this definition a fragment without its context will be read as ‘incomplete’ and subordinate to the completed it is extracted from. Architectural fragments have a power of resisting such expected unity and can be read into an alternative whole of none.
CEMENTA

FRAGMENT

cementa
FRAGMENT
cementa

FRAGMENT
cementa
OFFICE

BUILDING

office building
FRAGMENT
office building

FRAGMENT
office building
NITROLACKFABRIKEN
CUT

nitrolackfabriken
CUT
office building

CUT
cementa
Slakthusområdet is a similar case to Lövholmen, located on the border of the city the industrial space is going through a transformation to become a new urban site. Focus has been to reuse facilities and giving value to spaces once used for a particular purpose. A pocket utopia is created where residential areas, service and commerce is connecting. Diversity and the characteristics of a place is taking care of and a variation of scale and identity meet. The signature of the place will be based on three ground principles; the existing architecture, the public space and the urban green area.

To fully understand the layers of history in a place and to grasp the essence of it’s identity it is important to be aware of history when understanding the connection between architecture and memory. The transformation taking place at Slakthusområdet in Stockholm is an act of care for and a unique opportunity to learn from the relationship between the present and the past which I think is important when it comes to perceiving architecture. Architecture work as a frame of reference when it comes to our collective historical past. Memory and the context of a place belongs to a historical fabric.

The reflection made of what paradigm we live in now continuous in the tracks of the postmodern thoughts of looking back in history as well as meeting the techniques of the future. A lot of strong opinions has raised to keep spaces in the city carrying a certain kind of identity and history. What kind of spaces do we value and how much can a public opinion provide a base of a decision when it comes to urban space?

The postmodern movement is mainly defined by its contrary and demands for the past to be revisited. But when the postmodern era fuses with the capitalistic society a high degree of social polarization becomes the result. The modern movement failed to build for a better future to eliminate social structures by architecture. Ironically the postmodern reaction is failing on the same point. The challenge is to take on the uncertainty of the postmodern thinking and reformulate it to a reality of social and environmental sustainability. By wiping away when rebuilding on a site, not only does the historical buildings and layers of history disappear, but also the social structure changes. What is important today is to reevaluate space to avoid homogeneity and polarization.

To understand layers of Lövholmen I have choose to study spatial fragments. The definition of a fragment, when understood as something subordinate to the whole that completes it, is very limiting. As I see it, this definition fails to capture its full potential. If read as always referring to something else it stays in a state of belonging. The richness of the analysis of fragments as potentially something else opens up another way of using them. The way architectural fragments have the ability to resist an expected unity and be read into an alternative whole of none opens up the potential of the fragment as being an integrated part of something new or put to display when contrasting.

The purpose of this project has not been to save the industrial site in Lövholmen but to comment on the way planning is done today and to highlight the potential of already built space.
SUMMARY

Lövholmen
Stockholm

Architecture is an obvious remnant of our collective past and gives us a fragment of a former life and a different time. This unique relationship between what’s new and old is a very powerful spatial opportunity.

When dissecting and slicing buildings and turning them into fragments, the internal parts of the buildings becomes visible. Opening up of the enclosed urban skin and fragmenting it becomes an act of objectifying and sculpting. This I wanted to reverse by replacing the fragments I got back to the site of its origin. Fragments became the cut and serves as an addition as well as an opening. Spaces are created that communicates a meeting between a fragment and a building, odd couples reflects and reassemble parts of the site and displays space that was previously not available for the public.

Another effect of my project, when using fragments as a cutting object in the facades of the existing buildings, is the creation of ruins. Resulting in standalone objects, consisting of both the exterior and the interior. An interesting meeting occurred between the hidden inside and facade that hides it. By showing the dissection of the buildings as they decay in the site and making the spaces visible for people visiting the area I want to comment on the way historical buildings are valued today. My aim has also been to embody memory and recall spaces that will be forever lost.

By exhibiting my process and showing the most important pieces of my work I have tried to communicate the work of drawing that this project has meant to me. The pieces are displayed as fragments of my production and I have tried to play down the hierarchy of the result to show all the aspects of my findings.

Questions

-is the dream scenario to save Lövholmen?

My point is not to save everything at the site but to comment on the way we plan and build today. I think there can be found a great value in what is already there in a site, especially in places that once were used in one way and are going through a transformation. I think the dream scenario would be a that a layer of reflexion and consideration would be added to the economical aspect of building. I think this would add to the perception and the experiencing of spaces in the city.

-How is my method of using fragments relevant to the field of interior and architecture today?

I think my project is important because it talks about the relevance of taking in other considerations that the economical. I think the value in a space increase if a place is open and consist of different aspects such as different groups of people, different activities going on in a site instead of only focusing on the residential and closing off sites. I also think the outcome of building homogeneous is making places in the city not available for others.

-The kind of comment would I like to make?

The comments that I would like to make is: there is a value in keeping or adding to existing places in the city and spaces that was never meant to be used by the public can become an interesting junction. I am not saying this way is a better way of doing city planning but I think it is important to consider before to decide what to do in a place like this.
LIST OF LITERATURE

Findings through fragmentations

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