THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY NOWADAYS
COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN ARCHITECTURE
CRAFT SCHOOL IN ANDERLECHT
00 PROLOGUE
SPOLIA
SPOLIA

IN SE
Literal re-use of the elements

IN RE
Abstract reference to the context
**to spoliate (v)**

Use of the existing context as a tool for ‘as found’ strategy for the architectural projects. To spoliate refers to the architect as a bricoleur in a less literal way, meaning the strategy of designing as a stranger in a new context and interpreting elements, values and culture found in the place. Reference to the archaeological term spolia points out the necessity of involving knowledge reaching beyond architectural background in order to activate collective memory of certain place.

Through looking at both formal and informal values of a given context and interpreting it through the architect’s cultural background, the spoliation of the architecture takes place. Architecture spoliated with the context can re-interpret e.g. patterns, materials, elements, typologies and takes its uniqueness from the limitations given by the local context.
The kind of memory, which is shared between people in the certain community and is influenced by belonging to certain culture, doctrine or part of society. According to Maurice Halbwachs memory is a “reconstruction of the past using data from the present”. The memory can be linked with the buildings, monuments, public spaces or streets and refers highly to the relation between the human and specific place. It can refer to some important events happening in particular place, but also constitute to the identity understood in smaller scale (neighbourhood, district, city). According to Kevin Lynch the built environment is not only a spatial condition of the city - it carries specific meaning and serves as spatial coordinates of identity.
the city as a work of art

the city as a panorama

the city as a spectacle
the city nowadays
society
class
place

context
architecture

 typology
form
image
memory
01 THE SOCIETY, THE CHARACTER, THE PLACE
02 THE CONTEXT AND THE ARCHITECTURE
THE CONTEXT
THE CONTEXT

PHYSICAL CONSTRAINT

LOGIC OF THE PLACE
CRAFT SCHOOL / BRUSSELS - PRODUCTIVE METROPOLIS
CRAFT SCHOOL / THE IMPORTANCE FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
04 THE EPILOGUE
In the case of real design problem, even our conviction that there is such a thing as fit to be achieved is curiously flimsy and insubstantial. We are searching for some kind of harmony between two intangibles: a form which we have not yet designed and a context which we cannot properly describe.

Christopher Alexander
THANK YOU