

May mo(u)rn: transitional spaces in architecture and psychoanalysis — a site-writing

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Abstract

Addressing the architectural concept of the 'social condenser of a transitional type', the research traces this idea's progress from the Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow (1928–29), to Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseilles (1947–52), to the Alton West Estate in London (1954–58). At the same time, with reference to the work of Sigmund Freud, D.W. Winnicott, André Green and Jean Laplanche, the research investigates the inherently spatial vocabulary of psychoanalysis, in particular notions of the transitional space of the 'setting'. This physical and psychic scene of the psychoanalytic encounter is shown to offer new approaches for understanding relationships between subjects, objects, concepts and sites in architectural historical research and practice.

This essay is woven together out of three transitions: a sequence of theoretical insights drawn from psychoanalysis concerning the transitional spaces which exist in the relationships between a subject and his/her objects; alongside a series of transitions from one architectural space to a second and then a third; and next to a third strand — one which narrates the story of an arts and crafts building in London's green belt and the photographs of modern architecture I found within it — which aims to dissolve the frame of the story by recounting the writing and rewriting of this essay in response to its many tellings.¹

The psychoanalytic strand charts a particular set of ideas around transitional objects and spaces: starting out with Sigmund Freud's reflection on how the first object is also the lost object in his work on mourning and melancholia; before moving to D. W. Winnicott's notion of the transitional object as the object of the first relationship, and the transitional space it occupies between the internal psyche and external world; and then to André Green's work on the setting, 'a homologue', in his own words, for the analytic object positioned at the space of overlap between analyst and analysand, inside and outside; and ending with Jean Laplanche's critique of Freud's understanding of mourning, and his own concept of 'afterwardsness'.

The architectural strand examines transitional objects and spaces in terms of Moisei Ginzburg and Ignatii Milinits's Narkomfin Communal House (1928–9) in Moscow, whose design was influenced by Le Corbusier's early work, but which in turn inspired aspects of his *Unité d'Habitation* (1947–52) constructed in Marseilles some 20 years later. Certain principles of the *Unité* were then adopted and adapted in some of the public housing schemes built, following the Second World War, by the Welfare State in the United Kingdom, specifically the Alton West Estate in Roehampton, London (1954–8), designed by the London County Council. The Narkomfin was designed as a 'social condenser of the transitional type', whose transitional status came from its intention, to help a bourgeois society transform into a revolutionary one. Historically, the *Unité* occupies a transitional space in the transformation of the social condenser from its invention in Moscow to its later reworking in London.

The third strand, located in a transitional space between psychoanalysis and architecture, gives voice to May Morn, an Arts and Crafts house in London's green belt and the decaying photographs of modern architecture I found there one morning in May.

The essay is conceived of as a site-writing, a practice of critical history that searches for the most appropriate manner in which to try to articulate the position of the writing subject and her choice of objects of study and subject matter — intellectually, creatively, critically, emotionally. I am interested in investigating the sites between the historian-critic and the work, not just the material sites of production and reception of an architectural work, but also those imagined and remembered, near and far.

Site-Writing is an attempt then to explore a form of situated criticism, to investigate the position of the critic, not only in relation to art objects, architectural spaces and theoretical ideas, but through the site

of writing itself.² Arguments in site-writing are not necessarily organised as linear and sequential, rather I see the arrangement of the structure of a piece of writing as a form of architecture, a spatial configuration, where the writing aims to perform the spatial patterning suggested by the architectural conditions and psychic states being investigated through the research.³

This interest in site-writing as a critical spatial practice, in the composition of words in relation to one another, on a page, in a book, at the window, operating through devices which I consider to be spatial, such as voice, framing, view point, returning, is no doubt influenced by my early training as an architectural designer. I certainly think of writing as a creative response to a brief, which can combine different kinds of reaction, from a critique to a response that operates at the level of spatial proposition, and on to those which are more intuitive, emotional, associative, dreamy, meandering, out of place. Fascinated by how the spatial and often changing positions we occupy as critics — materially, conceptually, emotionally and ideologically — create conditions — situations — which make possible acts of interpretation and constructions of meaning, my practice of 'site-writing' operates in the interactive space between architecture and the user of his/her architecture, as well as the historian-critic, his/her essay and reader who comes next.⁴

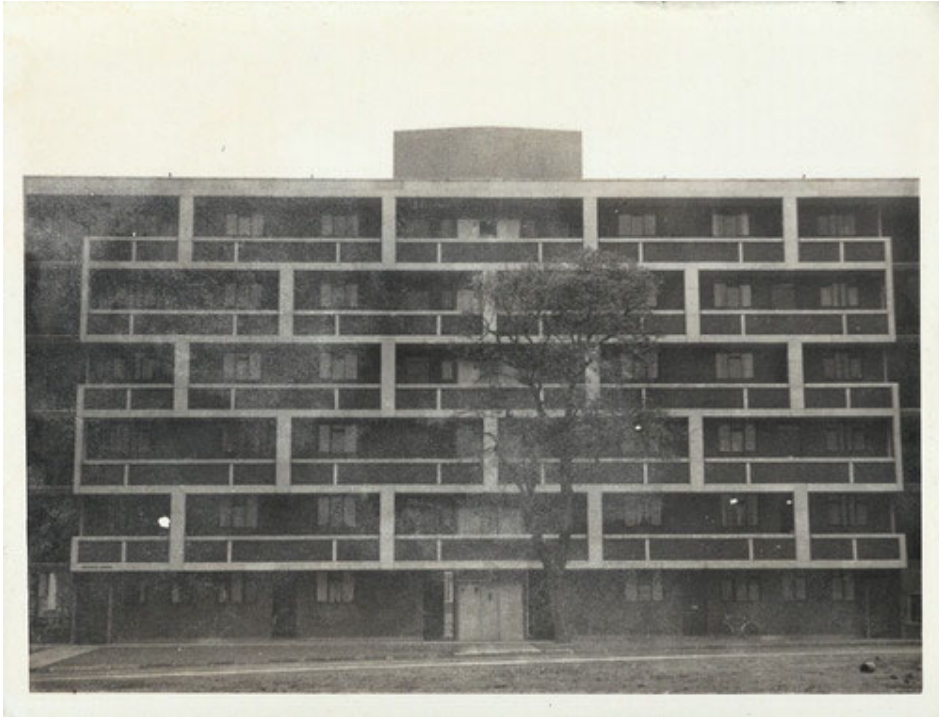
I'd like to begin this essay now with Frederic Jameson, who writes:

It is in detecting the traces of that uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text that repressed and buried reality of this fundamental history, that the doctrine of a political unconscious finds its function and its necessity.⁵

Here I will suggest that architecture's political unconscious can be explored through the three sites, the psychoanalytic 'setting', the architectural 'social condenser', and the practice of 'site-writing'. Jameson's term 'the political unconscious' calls for a form of literary criticism that explores the tensions of class struggle, not through vulgar Marxism but through mediation. If the unconscious is able to play a political role in producing a reading of a literary text that brings class struggle to the surface, what are the possibilities and processes of a criticism that would allow for the political unconscious to emerge in architecture?

May Morn

The house is beautiful — a one-storey building, with a square plan — born at the birth of modernism in the aftermath of the First World War. It embodies the values of early English modernism, of the Arts and Crafts movement: 'truth to materials' and honest craftsmanship



From the road it looks a little unloved, in need of some care and attention. Up close it is clearly derelict, almost in ruins



We enter a room with windows at each end. Curtains are falling away from the runners. The fabric has been soaked overnight and is drying in the spring afternoon sunshine. On the window sill and spilling over onto the floor are piles of old magazines. The pages are stuck together and disintegrate if you try to pull them apart



There are some photographs of buildings. One is particularly damp; the corners are soft, the surface is wrinkled. It shows a tower block, just completed, empty and pristine, a moss green utopia, the modernist dream dispersing as it soaks up spring rain⁶



The Lost Object

The affect corresponding to melancholia is that of mourning — that is, longing for something lost. Thus in melancholia it must be a question of a loss — a loss in *instinctual* life.⁷

Freud first mentions melancholia in 1894, in 'Draft D. On the Etiology and Theory of the Major Neuroses', where melancholia (linked to mania) is noted as one of seven features in his morphology of the neuroses.⁸ Writing very shortly afterwards in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess, Freud starts to develop his theory of melancholia,⁹ and associates it with loss of instinct, but although much of Freud's conceptual thinking on loss took place during his research on hysteria in the early to mid-1890s, he did not return to address melancholia until over 20 years later. In his paper 'Mourning and Melancholia', written in 1915 but not published until 1917, Freud defines mourning as a reaction to the loss of a loved person or ideal, but notes that while there is nothing about mourning that is unconscious, 'melancholia is in some way related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness'.¹⁰ He writes:

In melancholia the relation to the object is no simple one; it is complicated by the conflict due to ambivalence [...] In melancholia, accordingly, countless separate struggles are carried on over the object, in which hate and love contend with each other [...] The location of these separate struggles cannot be assigned to any system but the *Ucs.*, the region of the memory-traces of *things* (as contrasted with *word-cathexes*).¹¹

In Freud's later understanding of melancholia he differentiates it from mourning; for him, mourning is a process where a subject comes to terms with the loss of a loved object despite having a strong unconscious attachment to it, whereas in melancholia the subject cannot integrate the loss and

instead the ego identifies with the lost object, resulting in self-persecution. Today melancholia might be better described as depression, an emotional condition connected to a loss of self-esteem. In Freud's melancholia it is not so much that the subject is not able to mourn the loss of a particular person or thing, but rather that the subject becomes attached to the experience of loss itself.

The Narkomfin Communal House, Moscow (1928–9)

The concept of the social condenser was developed through the theoretical and then practical work of the Russian constructivists in the 1920s. Quoting artist Aleksei Gan, 'the capitalist towns are staunch allies of counter-revolution', architectural historian Catherine Cooke describes Gan's belief that the existing design of cities did not allow the social form of the revolution to flourish. She goes on to suggest 'a logical implication', that if one were to design the right kind of space, this would promote the new kind of society: 'if a "misfitting" environment can obstruct social change, a "fitting": one can foster it. If spatial organisation can be a negative catalyst, it can also be a positive one'.¹² Cooke discusses how the notion of the social condenser invented and promoted by the constructivists had to be, following Gan, actively 'revolutionary', and according to its subsequent development by architect and theorist Moisei Ginzburg must 'work' materially.¹³ She writes:

Low voltage activity and a weak consciousness would be focused through the circuits of these 'social condensers' into high-voltage catalysts of change, in the habits and attitudes of the mass population.¹⁴

This constructivist design methodology was developed in the designs for apartment types 'A-F' for STROIKOM, the Russian Building Committee, and then realised in six schemes, including the Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow, designed by Ginzburg with Milinis in 1928–1929.¹⁵

In Victor Buchli's fascinating in-depth ethnographic study of the Narkomfin, he underscores the importance of generating a new socialist *byt* or daily life, domesticity, lifestyle or way of life, for architectural designers in this period.¹⁶ He explains how OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), headed by Ginzburg: 'sought to address the issue of the new *byt* by creating an entirely new rationalized architecture and material culture based on communist theories of industrialized production and on patterns of consumption guided by socialist ethics'.¹⁷

Buchli discusses how the original programme for the Narkomfin included four separate buildings: a living block with three types of living unit following the STROIKOM guidelines (F, 2-F, and K types, along with dormitory units), the communal block (with a kitchen, dining room, gymnasium and library), a mechanical laundry building, and a communal crèche, which was never built. Buchli explains that the Narkomfin was a 'social condenser' of the transitional type. This meant that the accommodation allowed for both preexisting bourgeois living patterns (K and 2-F units) and fully communist F units.¹⁸ The main distinction between the two was that the former included kitchens and a family hearth, while the latter was primarily a sleeping unit with minimal facilities for preparing food, since cooking and eating were to take place in the communal block.

Buchli stresses that the variety was not an expression of tolerance, but rather reflected the OSA belief that architecture had a transformative power, capable of 'induc[ing] a particular form of social organization', and that the intention was that the building would help ease those following bourgeois living patterns into adopting socialist ones.¹⁹ He notes:

The Narkomfin Communal House was not designed as a fully fledged *Don Kommuna* but as a 'social condenser' of the transitional type.²⁰

Longing for the Lightness of Spring

In 2001 curator Jules Wright from the Wapping Project invited me to write an essay about Brotherus's work Spring. Spring was composed of two installations: a video triptych Rain, The Oak Forest, Flood (2001) in the boiler house and a back-lit image Untitled (2001), three metres by eight metres, reflected in the water tank on the roof of Wapping. Untitled showed an illuminated horizon dividing sky from earth: the pale grey sky of Iceland floating above what was once viscous lava now covered in green

moss. Projected on screens hung from the ceiling, Rain, The Oak Forest and Flood, comprised a video triptych. In the first video, the viewer, located on the inside of a window, watched, as rain streamed down the outside of the glass. The second showed an oak forest after the rain had stopped, but when drops, still heavy, continued to fall to the ground, John Betjeman's 'second rain'. The third video was of a flood, a forest of elegant trees rose silver from a pane of shining water

In responding to Spring, I found myself returning to scenes — real and imagined, remembered and dreamed — that corresponded with Brotherus's images and supplemented her landscapes with places of my own.

Moss Green

It's a beautiful house — one storey building, with a square plan — born at the birth of modernism in the aftermath of the First World War. It embodies the values of early English modernism, of the arts and crafts movement: 'truth to materials' and honest craftsmanship. From the road it looks a little unloved, in need of some care and attention. Up close it is clearly derelict, almost in ruins. We enter a room with windows at each end. Curtains are falling away from the runners. The fabric has been soaked overnight and is drying in the spring afternoon sunshine. On the window cill and spilling over onto the floor are piles of old magazines. The pages are stuck together and disintegrate if you pull them apart. There are some photographs of buildings. One is particularly damp, the corners are soft, the surface is wrinkled. It shows a tower block, just completed, empty and pristine, a moss green utopia, the modernist dream dispersing as it soaks up spring rain.

White Linen

I dreamt of the house last night. My mother's house in Cwmgors, south Wales, a place where it always rained in the holidays, that as a girl I resented, but now, as it is being taken from me, I already begin to miss. I was in the dining room; the rest of the house was empty except this one room. The furniture was far too big and covered in linen. The air was thick and still, silent. With the curtains drawn, it was very dark, but the linen glowed white. I went towards the mantel-piece to take a look at myself in the mirror, and I saw for the first time in the reflection, that the room was full of plants; so alive I could smell moisture still on their leaves.

Bittersweet

In Palafrugell, a small town north of Barcelona on the Costa Brava is a derelict cork factory with a clock tower in front. The clock tower is a handsome structure, elegant and robust, but the clock on top has stopped. The floor is covered in dust and pieces of furniture, lamp-stands, chairs and old printing machinery. There are words everywhere scattered all over the floor: burnt orange, turquoise, black and white, bittersweet. We stay in the factory a long time. We don't speak, just walk and look. Later, once we've left the building, he brings something to show me. It is a white sign with carefully painted black letters: 'Bittersweet'. I reach into my bag and pull out a clear perspex rod; along one side of it letters printed onto cardboard are embedded. From the top it is out of focus, but from the side, you can read it: 'Bittersweet'.

The three places I described made spatial, material and visual associations with Brotherus's Spring. In 'Moss Green' I remembered a derelict house in the green belt where in spring we found photographs of a brave new world of modernist high-rise housing. Just after the autumn equinox, just after her death, I dreamt of the shrouded home of my Welsh great aunt. 'White Linen' recalled the presence of life in the form of plants in this dream, while 'Bittersweet' recounted another spring visit, this time to an abandoned cork factory in Catalunya, where we found the names of the colours scattered, abandoned, all over the floor: black, white, orange, turquoise, bittersweet. Anticipating the end of winter, Spring opened in Wapping just after the autumn equinox in the northern hemisphere. Curatorially, the work faced towards the long decline into winter, the season from which it desired to turn away. Paralleling this juxtaposition which poised spring's hope for winter's retreat right at its early edge, I positioned Spring's foregrounding of anticipation as a yearning that looks forward to new life, against my own fascination with the backwards gaze of nostalgia. My three scenes — 'Moss Green', 'White Linen' and 'Bittersweet' — connected Brotherus's landscapes infused with anticipatory longing

to places tinted by nostalgia, constructing a tension between life and death, rejuvenation and decay, a looking forward and a turning backward.

The Transitional Object or the Object of the First Relationship

The focus of the theory of object relations created and developed by the Independent British Analysts is the unconscious relationship that exists between a subject and his/her objects, both internal and external.²¹ D. W. Winnicott introduced the idea of a transitional object, related to, but distinct from, both the external object, the mother's breast, and the internal object, the introjected breast. For Winnicott, the transitional object or the original 'not-me' possession stands for the breast or first object, but the use of symbolism implies the child's ability to make a distinction between fantasy and fact, between internal and external objects.²² This ability to keep inner and outer realities separate yet inter-related results in an intermediate area of experience, the 'potential space', which Winnicott claimed is retained and later in life contributes to the intensity of cultural experiences around art and religion. Winnicott discussed cultural experience as located in the 'potential space' between 'the individual and the environment (originally the object)'. In Winnicott's terms, for the baby this is the place between the 'subjective object and the object objectively perceived'.²³ For Winnicott:

This potential space is at the interplay between there being nothing but me and there being objects and phenomena outside omnipotent control. ... I have tried to draw attention to the importance both in theory and in practice of a third area, that of play which expands into creative living and into the whole cultural life of man. This third area has been contrasted with inner or personal psychic reality and with the actual world in which the individual lives and that can be objectively perceived. I have located this important area of *experience* in the potential space between the individual and the environment, that which initially both joins and separates the baby and the mother when the mother's love, displayed as human reliability, does in fact give the baby a sense of trust, or of confidence in the environmental factor'.²⁴

Unité d'Habitation, Marseilles (1947–1952)

The 'slab block' of the *Unité d'Habitation* was designed by Le Corbusier and built between 1947 and 1953 in Marseilles. The *Unité* was 17 stories high and housed 1600 people in 23 different flat types. Its intricate section of interlocking two-storey apartments with double height living spaces incorporated a *rue intérieure* every three floors. The *Unité* also included 26 communal facilities: an internal street of shops, with a laundry, post office, pharmacy, barbers, a hotel and restaurant, and a health centre on floors 7 and 8; and on the top floor, a kindergarden and nursery, leading to a garden on the roof, with a pool for children and a gymnasium.²⁵

The *Unité* draws on many aspects of Le Corbusier's earlier research and work, built and unbuilt, for example, the vertical gardens of the *Immeuble-Villas* (1922) and the five point plan — comprising *piloti*, free façade, open plan, ribbon windows and a roof garden — developed through the 1920s,²⁶ as well as the urban scale projects of *La Ville Contemporaine* (1922) and *La Ville Radieuse* (1935), and first realised in the *Villa Savoye* (1929–1931).

Le Corbusier made visits in the mid- to late 1920s to the Soviet Union to study the architecture,²⁷ and was inspired by a number of aspects of the Narkomfin design: including its innovative section, variable range in possible apartment types, including one with double height living space, and the provision of communal facilities such as the corridors and roof space. At the same time, Ginzburg and other Soviet constructivists in the early 1920s had read articles by Le Corbusier,²⁸ and references to Le Corbusier's five-point plan are evident in the design of Narkomfin,²⁹ in particular the Narkomfin's elevation on round reinforced concrete columns.³⁰

To focus on the creative overlap between the two schemes in terms of the borrowing of innovative architectural design features from each other could serve as a distraction from the important tensions that existed between Le Corbusier's and the Ginzburg's architectural intentions defined in terms of their political positions. Both Ginzburg and Le Corbusier were advocates of the machine, but if for Le Corbusier, technology's role was to support capitalism and to make it more efficient and rational, for the Russian constructivists, including Ginzburg, the radicalisation of architecture through new

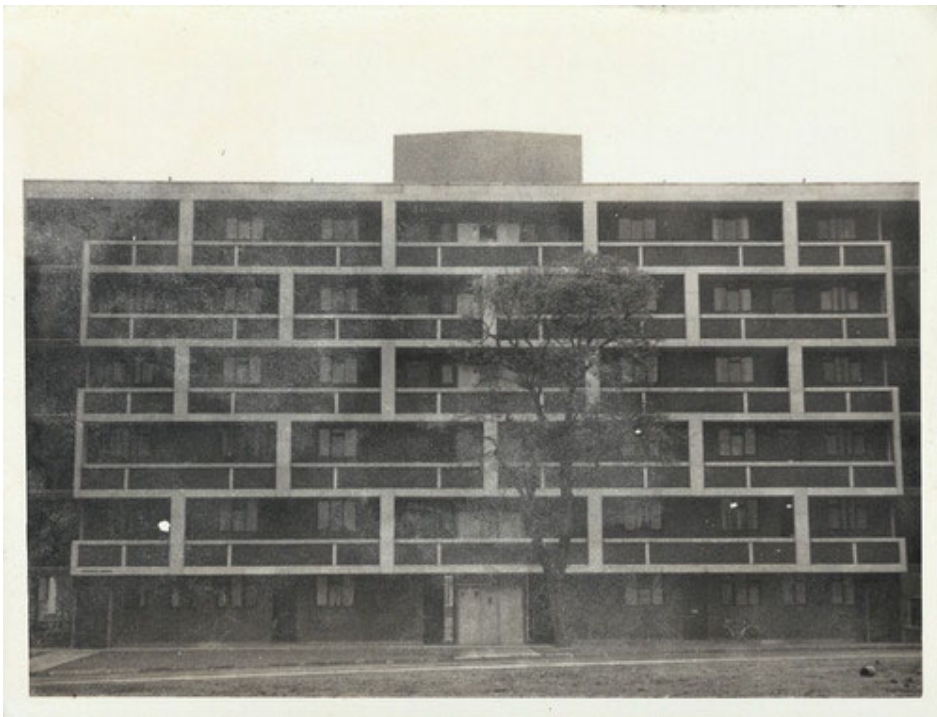
industrialised forms and processes was celebrated in order to develop the newly formed Bolshevik state based on socialist principles.³¹

For Ginzburg, at least in 1928, architecture could provoke revolution, for Corbusier, architecture's purpose was to take the place of revolution:

'Architecture or Revolution. Revolution can be avoided'.³²

May Mourn

A spacious one bedroom flat situated on the eighth floor commanding marvellous views of communal gardens and the city beyond. The property is located in a Grade II listed ex-local authority block with two newly installed lifts giving easy access to the shopping, restaurants and transport facilities of Bayswater (Circle & District lines) and Queensway (Central line), plus overground routes of Paddington. Magnificent Kensington Gardens are also close by



This property comprises of two double bedrooms and offers spacious living accommodation. The property is situated on the third floor and is in very good condition. The flat would be ideal for a first time buyer or a rental investment. It also benefits from being close to Roehampton university and local amenities



A practical three bedroom flat split over two levels on the upper level of this small block in Churchill Gardens. The property consists of two double and one single bedrooms, kitchen, reception room, bathroom, separate WC and a large balcony. The property requires updating but gives potential buyers the chance to put their own stamp on the property



Huge three bedroom flat located just by Camberwell Green. Offering generous living accommodation comprising three double bedrooms, spacious lounge and kitchen/breakfast room. In need of cosmetic attention, currently tenanted. Offered with no onward chain³³



The Setting: A Generalised Triangular Structure with Variable Thirds

In psychoanalytic theory, the main conditions of treatment, following Sigmund Freud, include 'arrangements' about time and money, as well as 'certain ceremonials' governing the physical positions of analysand (lying on a couch and speaking) and analyst (sitting behind the analyst on a chair and listening).³⁴ Freud's 'rules' for the spatial positions of the analytic setting, were derived from a personal motive — he did not wish to be stared at for long periods of time, but also from a professional concern — to avoid giving the patient 'material for interpretation'.³⁵

Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas has noted that Freud's clearest account of his method outlined in 'Two Encyclopaedia Articles: A. Psycho-Analysis',³⁶ suggests that psychoanalysis takes place if two functions are linked — the analysand's free associations and the psychoanalyst's evenly suspended attentiveness.³⁷ Bollas defines free association as that which occurs when we think by not concentrating on anything in particular, and where the ideas that emerge, which seem to the conscious mind to be disconnected, are instead related by a hidden and unconscious logic.³⁸ In order to achieve evenly suspended attentiveness Bollas explains that the analyst also has to surrender to his own unconscious mental activity; s/he should not reflect on material, consciously construct ideas or actively remember.³⁹ In Freud's later writings, he distinguishes between construction and interpretation as different forms of analytic technique:

'Interpretation' applies to something that one does to some single element of the material, such as an association or a parapraxis. But it is a 'construction' when one lays before the subject of the analysis a piece of his early history that he has forgotten. ⁴⁰

In a discussion of Freud's method, Winnicott distinguishes the technique from the 'setting in which this work is carried out'.⁴¹ André Green, who uses both Freudian and Winnicottian concepts in his work, considers the analytic setting a 'homologue' for what he calls the third element in analysis, the 'analytic object', which in his view 'corresponds precisely to Winnicott's definition of the transitional object',⁴² and is formed through the analytic association between analyst and analysand.⁴³

The analytic object is neither internal (to the analysand or to the analyst), nor external (to either the one or the other), but is situated between the two. So it corresponds precisely to Winnicott's definition of the transitional object and to its location in the intermediate area of potential space, the space of 'overlap' demarcated by the analytic setting.⁴⁴

Green notes that the transitional space of the setting has a 'specificity of its own', which differs from both outside and inner space.⁴⁵ He understands this as a spatial construction, as a 'generalised triangular structure with variable third'.⁴⁶ In Green's work triadic structures do not have to be Oedipal in the traditional sense, they incorporate Winnicott's transitional space between mother and child, mediated by the choice of a 'not-me object'. And as Green emphasises:

... the structure is triangular but it doesn't mean that it is Oedipal. The third can be, for instance, art.⁴⁷

Alton West Estate, Roehampton, London SW15 (1954–1958)

In England, the *Unité*'s intricate plan was simplified into a stack of identical maisonettes. The '*rue intérieure*', or internal access corridor, was replaced by the traditional English access balcony, which also was cheaper than the internal staircase access of the new point block type, and which made possible a greater economy in lift provision.⁴⁸

Alton West consisted of 65.89 acres of housing comprising 1867 dwellings located in 98.64 acres of parkland. The dwellings were grouped into 5 types, namely, 12-storey point blocks of flats, 11-storey slab blocks of maisonettes, 4-storey slab blocks of maisonettes and terraces of single-storey housing for old people. The tall blocks were located in three clusters, two of point-blocks and one of slab-blocks, with the lower buildings distributed between them.⁴⁹ Community facilities were provided in the form of schools — nursery, primary and comprehensive — a surgery, shops and a library.⁵⁰

Architectural historian Nicholas Bullock has outlined how Corbusier's *Unité* was a point of reference for the architects of the London County Council in the 1950s, and that while, for example, the architects of Alton East at Roehampton were advocates of New Humanism, those of Alton West were 'pro-Corbu'.⁵¹ Bullock refers to the hot debates held in London pubs over the adoption of the principles of the *Unité*, and how these were linked to divergent socialist views and attitudes to Soviet communism. Bullock also notes that in the translation from the *Unité* to Alton West certain key design features were lost including the communal spaces, double height living rooms, and central access corridor. Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius suggest that for economic reasons the traditional English access balcony replaced the *rue intérieure*.

A loss in translation was also registered in terms of the reduction of shared facilities including the roof garden, and a criticism made of the scheme at the time was that the separation of different housing types had produced a lack of coherent structure at a community level.⁵²

Moss Green

My first visit to the house I came to call 'Moss Green' had occurred in the spring of 2001. For the next decade I was to walk past Moss Green several times a year, as part of my weekly Sunday walk. Every Sunday morning, whatever the weather, my partner and I make the journey to Waterloo or London Bridge, and board a train taking us to the limit of the metropolis — to London's so-called green belt. After an about an hour we disembark the train and walk into the dusk along the paths of the Weald.

In our walks out of Sevenoaks we sometimes take the route down Oak Lane, then Grassy Lane, past Fig Street, and then along Gracious Lane, drawing to a halt at the fork in the road where Moss Green is situated. When we first saw the house we were entirely enchanted, with the way of life it

represented as well as the arresting beauty of its slow yet gentle decay. The house was single story, of a brick and timber construction, placed at the top of a scarp slope — with its porch facing a view out over southern England, under which two benches faced one another.

The interior was full of exquisite touches: a perfectly placed built-in cupboard, a carefully detailed window sill and frame, a thoughtful light switch, a door handle that fitted like a glove. It was hovering at that point where the decay was still able to provide an atmosphere of charm, where the thought of collapse could be held off, and where it was still possible to imagine oneself into the house, repairing the woodwork and occupying the rooms. We guessed it had probably been built after the First World War, perhaps as part of the programme — ‘Homes fit for Heroes’ — which allowed returning and often traumatised soldiers to readjust to civilian life in the comfort of a simple domestic setting with space for gardening and growing food.

But over the years the house has increasingly fallen into disrepair, and our spirits now sink each time we see it. When its slate roof was removed around three years ago the rot really set in and as a structure it is now barely stable. As it slipped passed the threshold of being ‘save-able’; we have surrendered our dream of living there ourselves in a modest rural retreat. No doubt the new owner is waiting for the moment of collapse, when the walls cave in, in order to construct a dwelling, which requires no restorative work. I wonder whether Moss Green should have been listed, whether I should have taken on that task myself.

And if it is not valued as a piece of architectural heritage, what are those emotional qualities it holds that make it feel special enough to want to save?

On one visit, years ago, when the house was open to the elements, but some of its contents still present, we noted books on architecture, old journals from the building trade, and piles of photographs. We salvaged a few items — notably one book, *New Architecture of London: A Selection of Buildings since 1930*,⁵³ along with a selection of black and white photographs, some of which are reproduced here.

Recently in examining the photographs more closely I have become fascinated with tracking down the buildings imaged in them. As well as the architectural qualities of the structures, I have had five text-based clues to work with — a board in front of one block of flats with the name: ‘Ernest Knifton Ltd’; a car parked outside another with the registration plate: ‘SLX 956’; a street sign reading ‘Westmoreland Terrace’; and letters over the entrances to two other buildings with the words: ‘2–24 Edmund Street’ and ‘Witl-’.

In working between *New Architecture of London* as well as web searches for the various clues, I have managed to track down most of the structures — it turns out that the majority we now regard as modernist icons: The Elmington Estate (1957), Picton Street, London SE5, designed by the LCC Architect’s Dept., now largely demolished; The Hallfield Estate (1952–1955), Bishops Bridge Road, W2, designed by Tecton, Drake and Lasdun for Paddington Borough Council; The Alton East Estate (1952–1955), Portsmouth Road, SW15, designed by the LCC Architect’s Dept.; The Alton West Estate (1955–1959), Roehampton Lane, SW15, designed by the LCC Architect’s Dept.; and Churchill Gardens (1950–1962), Grosvenor Road, Lupus Street, SW1, designed by Powell and Moya for Westminster City Council.

At the same time I was searching for a new flat of my own in London to live in and buy. So I took the opportunity to view these buildings via prime.location.com. The search revealed their ‘value’ in economic terms, as property, as commodities. From an estate agent’s perspective, these flats are described as ideal investments, not as places where the purchaser might choose to live, but rather as buy-to-let opportunities, real estate to be rented out to students and others. The images of fully occupied domestic settings on the property website provided an interesting counterbalance to the just completed exteriors photographed from the outside, positioning the architecture as a commodity to be purchased by individuals as well as (or instead of?) social entities to be lived in by communities.

Searching for modernist icons through primelocation.com has been a stark reminder of what has happened to the progressive ideals of modernism. Some of the modern movement’s public housing

projects have become oases of cool property in the London postcodes associated with the rich, often been well maintained, sometimes privatised and provided with concierge schemes, while for others located in up and coming neighbourhoods, the somewhat grimy conditions of their neglected public spaces — lifts, stairways and facades — have been overlooked by purchasers keen to be part of the lifestyles offered by certain parts of London in terms of cultural caché.

Those estates in the poorer boroughs, often in aspiring regeneration zones, have been allowed to decline materially, not included in 'major works' programmes — the large-scale council repair and maintenance cycles, and located in so-called 'sink estates'. Many are being demolished because the years of neglect have led to conditions of terminal dereliction, and resulted in the original construction being judged as too expensive to overhaul.

But what of the person who lived in Moss Green and once owned the photographs of these modern buildings? Was he or she an architect, and if so did they play a role in designing the buildings in the photographs? How did they compare these schemes for urban mass housing with their own rural bungalow. If the delicate beauty of Moss Green points outwards to a whole network of modernist icons, how should one compare these two modernisms — the earlier vernacular craft-based phase of the Arts and Crafts with the later phase of industrialisation and standardisation?

From Tacita Dean's work critiquing the heroism of the modernism by pointing to the failure of certain technological schemes, such as *Sound Mirrors* (1999), to Rut Blees Luxemburg's glowing photographs of north London's highrise flats, *Caliban Towers I and II* (1997), which title modernist architecture a monster, there has been a recent fascination with the so-called failure of the modern project. In some cases, this takes the form of a wistful melancholy for modernism's passing, at other times a more gleeful delight at the collapse of a social dream, that some see as too forceful and others as ridiculously idealistic.⁵⁴

I'm not so sure modernism has failed, rather I think the aspirations for social community and progress it embodies have been driven out, in England at least, by governments keen to promote an ideology of home-ownership. If everyone is weighed down by a hefty mortgage, the capacity for dissent is drastically reduced.

There is a lot at stake when the social housing of the modernist project is sold off as 'a good opportunity for investment' on primelocation.com; it is perhaps not overstating the case to suggest it has created a disaster for the left, not only because the number of homes available to let by the council are reduced for those who need them, but also because those who buy them become part of the propertied class and all that entails. I know this because I am part of the problem.

Returning to Moss Green, once again, several weekends ago, much of the timberwork had collapsed and was lying in pieces over the grass. I turned one rotten section over to reveal two words painted in fast fragmenting white letters: 'May Morn'. This, I remembered, was the building's name plaque, which had been located at the entrance to the plot, framed by brambles, when we first came across the house.

Morn and mourn are homonyms, one suggests a beginning, the other an ending. Morning begins the day, while mourning — in grieving the loss of something or someone — marks an ending. Due to their deteriorating material states, the Moss Green house, the paper of the photographs, and the painted letters 'May Morn', all three point towards their own disintegration — or endings, yet the buildings contained within the photographs are shown at the beginning of their life. What does it mean, now, to turn back and examine these icons of modernism at an early moment — a spring-time — when hope for a better future was not viewed as a naïvely misjudged optimism.

I wrote the very first version of this essay on a May morn, a day before the general election of 6 May 2010 in the United Kingdom, and I delivered it as a talk six days later, at the University of Roehampton, after I had voted Liberal for the first time in my life, so disgusted was I with New Labour's lies over the Iraq War, and with the transfer of public funds into the hands of the banking élite, on a day the coalition between the Liberals and Tories was formed, on a day on which I discovered I had helped to deliver the country a Tory government.

I was approached after my talk and asked: 'Did you know there are two homonyms in the title of your talk not one'. I looked back blankly. 'May the month and may the verb', he explained. And then added, 'You seem to be asking for a right to mourn'.

It turns out May is a homograph not a homonym; May is a month of the year, but may is also a modal verb — one which expresses possibility, to express a wish or hope and also to request permission: 'may I mourn?'

So post New Labour's ambivalence towards the public sphere, the Conservative agenda is to impose drastic cuts to the public sector in the name of 'austerity' — double speak for what is actually a transfer of funds to the financial elite. In such a political climate enacting a mourning for modernist housing is potentially a rather regressive and romantic project.

But writing positively of nostalgia, as a longing for something better, Jameson has pointed out, with reference to the earlier work of Walter Benjamin on allegory and ruin, looking back to a past because it appears to be better than the problems of the present is not necessarily regressive, especially if it can be used to change the future. He writes: 'But if nostalgia as a political motivation is most frequently associated with Fascism, there is no reason why a nostalgia conscious of itself, a lucid and remorseless dissatisfaction with the present on the grounds of some remembered plenitude, cannot furnish as adequate a revolutionary stimulus as any other ...'.⁵⁵

At this moment, as we witness the slow and deliberate destruction of the public sphere, I'd like to put forward the social condenser as architecture's political unconscious, an aspect, in Jameson's terms, of the 'repressed and buried history' of class struggle. I consider this essay, according to Freud's psychoanalytic practice, as a 'construction', 'a moment when one lays before the subject of the analysis a piece of his early history'. In this moment, I lay the Narkomfin, a piece of early history, before those photographs of London's modernist social housing found at May Morn, the subject of this analysis.

Afterwardsness

In his essay 'Interpretation between Determinism and Hermeneutics', Jean Laplanche discusses the two psychoanalytic positions of reconstruction and construction in relation to historiography. The position based on reconstruction 'claims that neurosis is a disease of memory' and that only the recovery of the subject's real history (whether by a lifting of infantile amnesia or by a reconstruction) can allow the ego to detach itself from blind mechanisms and achieve some degree of freedom.⁵⁶ For Freud, according to Laplanche, any construction or interpretation of material made by an analysand is always a reconstruction,⁵⁷ but for Laplanche, analysis is first and foremost a method of deconstruction (analysis), with the aim of clearing a way for a new construction, which is the task of the analysand. He writes of Penelope, who in the myth weaves with the sole aim of unweaving, to gain time until Ulysses returns. He discusses the Greek word *analuein*, which is to undo, unweave, and to analyse. He sees the work of unweaving 'as the very model of psychoanalysis': 'unweaving so that a new fabric can be woven, disentangling to *allow* the formation of new knots'.⁵⁸

Laplanche makes a very interesting connection here between the work of psychoanalysis and that of mourning. In a close discussion of Freud's paper 'Mourning and Melancholia', as well as his earlier 'Studies in Hysteria', Laplanche draws out two aspects of mourning directly linked to temporalisation: mourning as a 'kind of *work*, the work of memory', and mourning as 'an affect with a *duration* [...] it occupies a lapse of time'.⁵⁹ He suggests that there is a certain lack in Freud's discussion of mourning; how, in describing mourning as 'normal' compared to melancholia, Freud fails to recognise the unconscious dimension of the loss in ordinary mourning. If Freud's argument, as Laplanche has it, follows three steps — first, that simple loss is mourning; second, that loss plus ambivalence produces obsessional mourning with guilt; and third, that loss plus ambivalence plus narcissistic object-choice produces melancholia — then, how, asks Laplanche, can mourning as a simple form of loss not involve object loss?⁶⁰

Freud spoke of 'memories' and 'expectations' attaching us to the other. What he doesn't take account of, but which is rarely absent — precisely in the fabric, the context of those memories and

expectations — is the place for the message of the other. For the person in mourning, that message has never been adequately understood, never listened to enough. Mourning is hardly ever without the question: what would he be saying now? What would he have said, hardly ever without regret or remorse for not having been able to speak with the other enough, for not having heard what he had to say.⁶¹

Laplanche argues that Freud's aim was not to restore historical continuity by reintegrating lost memories, but rather to produce a history of the unconscious. In this history — one of discontinuity, burial and resurgence — the difference is that the turning points or moments of transformation are internal rather than external, described in terms of 'scenes' as opposed to the 'events' of history.⁶² Laplanche reworks Freud's discussion of the three kinds of material presented for analysis — as fragments of memories in dreams, ideas and actions — into, firstly, memories and fragments of memories within which 'the major scenes are to be found', 'scattered, fragmented or repeated'; secondly, 'constructions or ideologies or theories representing the way the individual has synthesised *his* existence for *himself*'; and thirdly, 'unconscious formations', inaccessible 'derivatives of the original repressed'.⁶³

In their commentary on Freud's work, Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis posit that the 'defining property of the symptom' can be located in the manner in which it reproduces 'in a more or less disguised way' elements of past conflict, and the ways that 'the repressed seeks to "return" in the present, whether in the form of dreams, symptoms or acting-out'.⁶⁴

For in between the primary intervention of the other and the creation of the other thing in me, there occurs a process called repression — an extremely complex process comprising at least two stages in mutual interaction, and leading to a veritable dislocation/reconfiguration of (explicit and implicit-enigmatic) experiential elements.⁶⁵

Repetition can be understood as a conscious, but not necessarily knowing, acting out of repressed feelings stored in the unconscious. The temporal structure of deferred action, *nachträglichkeit* in the German original, *après coup* in the French translation, provides one way of understanding the distinction between conscious and unconscious in terms of their division and then interaction over time, how one is separated from, but returns in, the other. Laplanche chooses the neologism 'afterwardsness' as his preferred English translation, as he finds that this term is better able to embrace the double temporal direction — the 'to and fro' or back and forth — of retrogressive and progressive actions, as well as the processes of detranslation and retranslation that he holds are central to the concept of *nachträglichkeit*.⁶⁶

For Laplanche, the exemplary mourning figure is Penelope, it is her work of weaving and unweaving that is 'an emblem of the gradual yet inexhaustible unpicking of the ties binding her to a husband who may never return, and the partial orientation of that work towards the possibility of a new composition'. So writes Nicholas Ray, in his obituary to Laplanche, who died while I was working on an early version of this paper. For Ray, Laplanche's account of mourning 'emerges as the very prototype of analytical endeavour'. Both are, as Ray argues:

a reckoning with the past, a working though of the legacy of the other, which is structurally interminable yet partially oriented towards a future. The death of Laplanche brings to a close an immense labour of reckoning by one of Freud's most assiduous and devoted legatees. He leaves us with a remarkable body of thought, and a lasting call to analyse, to mourn.⁶⁷

Crossmount House, London (1967–8)

My first fascination with *May Morn* had occurred in a spring, a season of transition, in the month of May, a month associated with the labour movement, over 15 years ago. I write the final part of the essay in May from a tower block in south London, where from my flat on the eighteenth floor I can see a history of London's housing design lying at my feet. I look from the Georgian townhouses of the estate agent's newly coined 'Walworth village' to the ragged holes in the ground where the Heygate Estate used to be; from the pointed end of the Shard at London Bridge, where — soaring skyward — penthouses contain private swimming pools and cinemas, to the 'affordable' new flats being built

along the northern edge of Burgess Park, in place of the social housing provided by the slab blocks of the Aylesbury estate, some of which have already been demolished, while others lie under threat. Despite the claims made for austerity, from here I see no lack of money; judging by the number of cranes on the horizon, the city of London's surplus capital has sloshed so far over the southern banks of the Thames that it has finally reached south Walworth.

One May morn, I bump into a young man at the entrance to my block who asks me what it is like to live here.⁶⁸ He is considering buying a flat, as the block was designed, he tells me excitedly, by Colin Lucas, the lead architect, of Roehampton's Alton West, and built in 1967, the same year as me.

Many postwar social housing schemes are currently judged to have failed in their intentions or to be structurally unsound, but the problem is more often the lack of investment in the communal spaces and infrastructure, rather than the original aspirations or engineering design. I see the years of neglect in my own point block, where the social condensers — laundries, one on each floor — all lie empty, the doors recently padlocked by Southwark Council, because of the 'health and safety' threat they pose. Yet the one act of repair Southwark Council have invested in smacks of aesthetic vandalism and will stop us residents ever accessing our balconies again. As spring turns to summer, the beautiful Crittall windows, which frame my view over Burgess Park, are smashed out. The configuration of Southwark Council's newly installed double-glazed units completely ignores the 1960s design: three picture windows are replaced by six narrow ones, whose plastic frames are double the width of the originals, the sills so high that I can no longer step out onto my balcony, to the edge of the building-line as my lease shows, and perform my duty of repairing and maintaining my property. With no evidence to support their claim, Southwark Council argue that *they* own the balcony — I ask them how they will keep to their part of the contract, and repair and maintain the balcony in the future. Silence. Currently it is filthy, the plaster crumbling off the exterior wall, and the screws falling out of the frame that holds in place the glass screen 18 storeys off the ground.

As summer turns to autumn, and as I draw this research to a close, I discover that my flat is in Southwark's 'estate renewal zone'.⁶⁹ Property consultants Savills have been advising the council of the need to 'unearth the potential' of public land, including 'brownfield sites', a term which for them includes fully occupied housing estates.⁷⁰ Post-war 'point' and 'slab' blocks are not dense enough, and must be replaced by mansion blocks situated on re-introduced old-school street layouts.⁷¹ Although new research shows refurbishment has less social and environmental cost than demolition,⁷² the advantage of new build is that existing residents can be moved out, and in return, following viability studies, the developers can make their non-negotiable 20 per cent profit while providing a small percentage of 'affordable housing'.⁷³ Tenants are displaced from central London into other boroughs,⁷⁴ and leaseholders ejected from the city entirely, as the rates of compensation paid when the councils issue compulsory purchase orders are so low.⁷⁵

What is happening to the other estates in my decaying black-and-white photographs, I wonder? At Roehampton, a regeneration scheme is underway;⁷⁶ at Churchill Gardens, it is immanent;⁷⁷ at Hallfield, leaseholders are being charged for a multi-million-pound refurbishment package which has stalled;⁷⁸ and at the Elmington, I keep watch as the democratic values of the 1950s are crushed into rubble.

Afterwords

Writing this essay has brought with it a kind of afterwardsness in a number of ways, though perhaps not exactly in the way Laplanche had in mind. I have experienced the constant sense of arriving too late, after it seems that the research has already been done, but by somebody else. Owen Hatherley reminds me of the Narkomfin, but too late, after a major exhibition on Russian Constructivism has already been advertised. I arrive at the Royal Academy, but again too late, the show has already been taken down.⁷⁹ Excitedly, I head to University of Cambridge to see the archives of Catherine Cooke, a Narkomfin specialist. I arrive at the library to be confronted by a poster for an exhibition being installed on the day of my visit — in time to see this new display of her Russian memorabilia, but too late to have unearthed her research ephemera for myself.⁸⁰ And finally, I get a message from my dad, who suggests, very helpfully, that there is an exhibition on English 1950s and 1960s modernism at the RIBA library that I might like to see, given my interest in tracking down the buildings in those photographs I have found. I rush over to Portland Place, by this time sensing trouble, and yes, there it

is, an exhibition linking London County Council housing in the UK — including Churchill Gardens and Roehampton West — not just to Le Corbusier's *Unité*, but right back to the Narkomfim.⁸¹ However, it has not only been a case of coming afterwards, in the sense of arriving too late. In a way, by choosing to examine three iconic buildings, it was naïve to have anticipated that things could have turned out otherwise. How could I have imagined that in such a densely occupied territory, packed full of the kind of architectural icons I have spent my academic career so far avoiding, there could be any room for me to manoeuvre? So no, I am not talking here of afterwards as the experience of coming after these/those others, the feeling that the process of discovery has already taken place, that their work has already come before mine; rather, I am trying to figure afterwards in another sense, more akin to the psychoanalytic sense of Freud's *Nachträglichkeit*, translated into French as *après coup*, and Laplanche's preferred English version of 'afterwardsness'. My research has taken me back to places that I have already been to, to some early scenes, which at the time did not clearly register, that have only taken on significance afterwards.



In the 1980s, when I was studying architecture at the University of Sheffield, I refused to be interested in anything related to Le Corbusier. The initial task we were assigned as first-year students involved making a model of the Villa Roche. I angrily messed it up, cutting the too-thick white card and its fuzzy interior (in ignorance, I had purchased the wrong weight and type) with a blunt knife, smearing the model in blood, badly scrubbed out and then hastily, but rather proudly, covered over with Tipp-Ex. I had turned away from male architects in general, but this modern master in particular, refusing to visit his buildings, believing that there was nothing a feminist could learn from a patriarch. But I wonder, now, how could I then, as a feminist but also as a socialist, have managed to overlook the fascinating Park Hill, perched on the hill overlooking the station, and my favourite nightclub, the Leadmill? I only really discovered Park Hill with its streets-in-the-sky influenced indirectly by Le Corbusier's *Unité* (and now, I realise, more specifically by the Narkomfim) many years later when I was invited to contribute a text to a volume of artists' responses to brutalism, at the time the housing estate was being regenerated by Hawkins/Brown through Urban Splash.⁸² I finally made it to the Marseilles Unité on a weekend in early autumn, in the golden light of September, when by chance the building was open to the public as part of *La Journée Portes Ouvertes*, France's version of Open House, offering me an unexpected opportunity to visit not only the show apartment, but homes of residents, some of whom had occupied the Unité from the beginning.



Studying for my diploma in architecture at the University of Edinburgh several years later, I found something much more important to do when my tutor, Isi Metzstein, first organised for us to visit St Peter's, a disused Roman Catholic seminary at Cardross outside Glasgow, designed in 1966 as a kind of homage to Le Corbusier's seminal seminary, *La Tourette*, when Isi was part of the architectural practice Gillespie, Kidd and Coia. It was not until 22 years later, when invited by the 'Invisible College' to contribute to a project by the Glasgow-based art group NVA who were working on the building's 'regeneration', that I finally got there, with Isi dead and the building a ruin, over a half-life afterwards.⁸³



Setting off to pay homage to the Narkomfin, I travelled by train through Berlin, last visited as a student with Isi in the 1990s, to explore the housing of the 1960s, this time to see the exhibition on the Narkomfin that I had missed at the Royal Academy. After a night in Berlin, I travelled on to Moscow, arriving in July, somewhat late, as I had planned to visit in May, in spring. The grey skies and oppressive heat of summer reminded me of my first visit as an architecture student from the University of Edinburgh in 1991. Had I passed by the Narkomfin before? Would I remember it when I found the building again? I walked the streets in search of the Moscow I remembered. How long does it take to recognise something, and what do we do with that sense of recognition when it arrives, afterwards?



Notes

RIBA President's Awards for Research, 2018: winner, History and Theory theme.

1 This essay, so far unpublished, brings together for the first time the key arguments of a much longer book on the subject. See Jane Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis: Spaces of Transition* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2017).

2 For an account of the conceptual framework that underpins my practice of 'site-writing' see Jane Rendell, 'Architecture-Writing', Jane Rendell (ed.) *Critical Architecture*, special issue of *The Journal of Architecture* v. 10. n. 3 (June 2005), pp. 255–64.

3 See Jane Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009).

4 While Jameson is harshly sceptical of critical writings which create homologies between the production of texts and factory production, as well as the inclusion of the signifier within materialist critique, I argue that if one is to engage with unconscious processes then it is not only the literary text placed under analysis which must be included within the critical process but also the text produced by the critic him/herself, and that the material conditions which give rise to the production of such texts need to be taken into account. See Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* [1981] (London and New York: Routledge, 1983), p. 30.

5 Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, p. 4.

6 Note: The captions to these photographs spoken are taken from a text, originally entitled 'Moss Green', written as one in a series of three, contained within a critical essay on the work of artist Elina Brotherus and published as 'Longing for the Lightness of Spring'. See Jane Rendell, 'Longing for the Lightness of Spring', in *Elina Brotherus* (London, 2001): pp. 19–26. The quoted comments are based on an interview conducted with Elina Brotherus on 28 September 2001.

7 Sigmund Freud, 'Draft G. Melancholia' (Undated? 7 January 1895), from *Extracts From The Fliess Papers. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume I (1886–1899): Pre-Psycho-Analytic Publications and Unpublished Drafts*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1966), pp. 200–6, p. 200.

8 Sigmund Freud, 'Draft D. On the Etiology and Theory of the Major Neuroses', from *Extracts from the Fliess Papers. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume I (1886–1899): Pre-Psycho-Analytic Publications and Unpublished Drafts*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1966), pp. 186–7, p. 186.

9 Freud, 'Draft G. Melancholia', p. 202.

10 Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', [1915 (1917)], *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914–1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), pp. 237–58, pp. 255–6.

11 Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', pp. 255–6.

12 Catherine Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde: Theories of Art, Architecture and the City* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), p. 38.

13 Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 118. For an excellent account of Ginzburg's position as an architectural theorist and practitioner, see Anatole Senkevitch, 'Introduction: Moisei Ginzburg and the Emergence of a Constructivist Theory of Architecture', Moisei Ginzburg, *Style and Epoch*, [1924] introduction and translation by Anatole Senkevitch (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1982), pp. 10–33.

14 Catherine Cooke (ed.), *Russian Avant-Garde: Art and Architecture*, special issue of *Architectural Design*, v. 53 (5/6) (1983), p. 42.

15 Cooke (ed.), *Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 44–5. See also Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (Oxford: Berg, 1999). See also Moisei Ginzburg, 'New Methods of Architectural Thought', *Contemporary Architecture*, n. 1 (1926), pp. 1–4 for a discussion of the constructivist method; and for the Narkomfin, Moisei Ginzburg, 'Housing Complex for Employees of Narkomfin, Moscow', *Contemporary Architecture*, n. 5 (1929), pp. 161–2 for plans, and *Contemporary Architecture* (1930), n. 5, pp. 6–13, for photographs of the just completed building.

16 Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism*, p. 23.

17 Victor Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 57(2) (1998): pp. 160–81, p. 161.

18 Buchli notes that the original design was the A-1 *Don Kommuna* entered in a competition and exhibition of *Don Kommuny* organised by OSA in Moscow in 1927. Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 179, note 13. According to Gary Berkovich, the architects of this 1927 design were Anatolii Ladinskii and Konstantin Ivanov, under direction of their professor Andrey Ol'. See Gary Berkovich, 'My Constructivism', translated from Russian, by Gary Berkovich and David Gurevich, extracted from the book of memoirs *Human Subjects*. Excerpts from 'My Constructivism' were first published in the *Inland Architect* magazine, v. 25, n. 8 (1981), pp. 8–19.

19 Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 162.

20 Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 162.

21 Gregorio Kohon (ed.) *The British School of Psychoanalysis: The Independent Tradition* (London: Free Association Books, 1986), p. 20. The British School of Psychoanalysis consists of psychoanalysts belonging to the British Psycho-Analytical Society, within this society are three groups, the Kleinian Group, the 'B' Group (followers of Anna Freud) and the Independent Group.

22 D. W. Winnicott, 'Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena — A Study of the First Not-Me Possession', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 34 (1953), pp. 89–97, see in particular pp. 89 and 94. See also D. W. Winnicott, 'The Use of an Object', *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 50 (1969), pp. 711–16.

23 See D. W. Winnicott, 'The Location of Cultural Experience', *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 48 (1967), pp. 368–72, p. 371. See also D. W. Winnicott: *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1991).

24 Winnicott, 'The Location of Cultural Experience', pp. 371–2.

25 For the initial designs see, Le Corbusier, *Oeuvre complete 1938–1946* (Zurich: publié par Willy Boesiger, architecte, Zurich, Les Editions d'Architecture Erlenbach-Zurich, 1946), pp. 172–87. See also Alban Janson and Carsten Krohn, *Le Corbusier, Unité d'habitation, Marseilles* (London and Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2007).

26 Le Corbusier developed his five point plan through publications in the journal *L'Esprit Nouveau* from 1921 and his book *Vers une architecture* first published in Paris in 1923.

27 Jean-Louis Cohen, *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR: Theories and Projects for Moscow 1928–1936* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

28 Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 38–9 and Cooke (ed.), *Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 122.

29 For example the debt Le Corbusier's Unité owes the Narkomfin is noted by numerous critics and historians. See also 'An interview with Richard Pare, photographer and expert on Soviet Modernist architecture', by Tim Tower 13 November 2010. See <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/nov2010/pare-n13.shtml> (accessed 16 May 2018).

30 Franziska Bollerey and Axel Föhl, 'Architecture of the Avant Garde: Icons and Iconoclasts' p. 46. http://www.maps-moscow.com/userdata/part_01.pdf (accessed 16 May 2018).

31 Cohen quotes in great detail a letter to Moscow architects published in *Stroitelnaia Promyshlennost* in 1929 where El Lissitzky puts forward a strong critique of Le Corbusier, identifying some key problematics of his approach, for example, his understanding of architecture as a 'buffer between the producer/entrepreneur and the consumer/inhabitant', his position as a Western artist, and this individualist, his interest in the building as showpiece rather than a place to be lived in, and his formal preference for classicism, see pp. 107–9. See Cohen, *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR*, pp. 107–9.

32 See Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture* (1923). For comparison see also Moisei Ginzburg, *Style and epoch* (1924). Richard Pare argues that here Corbusier takes the luxury liner and the private villa as his examples; Ginzburg takes the warship and the communal house. See 'An interview with Richard Pare'.

33 All quotes taken from prime.location.com May 2010.

- 34 Sigmund Freud, 'On Beginning the Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis I)' [1913] *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XII (1911–1913): The Case of Schreber, Papers on Technique and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), pp. 121–44, p. 126 and p. 133. For a detailed description of Freud's consulting room, see Diana Fuss and Joel Sanders, 'Berggasse 19: Inside Freud's Office', Joel Sanders (ed.) *Stud: Architectures of Masculinity* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), pp. 112–39.
- 35 Freud, 'On Beginning the Treatment', p. 134.
- 36 See Sigmund Freud, 'Two Encyclopaedia Articles: (A) Psycho-Analysis [1923]', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII (1920–1922): Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), pp. 235–54.
- 37 Christopher Bollas, 'Freudian Intersubjectivity: Commentary on Paper by Julie Gerhardt and Annie Sweetnam', in *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 11(2001): pp. 93–105, p. 93.
- 38 Christopher Bollas, *Free Association* (Duxford, Cambridge, 2002), pp. 4–7.
- 39 Bollas, *Free Association*, p. 12.
- 40 Sigmund Freud, 'Constructions in Analysis [1937]', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XXIII (1937–1939): Moses and Monotheism, An Outline of Psycho-Analysis and Other Works*, translated from the German under the general editorship of James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1963), pp. 255–70, p. 261.
- 41 D. W. Winnicott, 'Metapsychological and Clinical Aspects of Regression Within the Psycho-Analytic Set-Up', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 36 (1955), pp. 16–26, p. 20.
- 42 André Green, 'Potential Space in Psychoanalysis: The Object in the Setting', Simon A. Grolnick and Leonard Barkin (eds) *Between Reality and Fantasy: Transitional Objects and Phenomena* (New York and London: Jason Aronson Inc., 1978), pp. 169–89, p. 180.
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67 Jean Laplanche, 'Time and the Other' p. 254, referred to in Nicholas Ray, 'Jean Laplanche, 1924–2012: Forming New Knots', *Radical Philosophy*, v. 174 (July/August 2012), pp. 53–6, p. 56. Available at <http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/obituary/jean-laplanche-1924-2012> (accessed 16 May 2018).

68 The Wyndham Estate in London SE5 was built in 1967–8 and consists of five 21-storey point blocks with several low-rise structures and community buildings located between them. See *Some Where Decent to Live* (1967) at 22 minutes 13 seconds for footage of the construction of the estate.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A2wa9yeAKk> (accessed 17 May 2018). The same point block design was repeated in at least three other estates in London, one in Bermondsey and two in Wandsworth. For images and discussion of the two point blocks at the Canada Estate, Bermondsey, see for example, 'Special Issue: Housing in the City', *Architectural Forum* (July–August 1965); 'London County Council, Canada Estate, Neptune Street, Bermondsey, London', *Architects' Journal* (3 February 1965), pp. 305–16; 'Housing at Canada Estate, Neptune Street, Bermondsey, London; Architect: H. Bennett, Greater London Council architect', *Casabella*, n. 305 (1966), pp. 60–5; 'High Density Housing: four recently completed Greater London Council schemes in South London; Architect: H. Bennett', *Official Architecture & Planning* (January 1966), pp. 72–81; and 'Canada Estate, Neptune Street, Bermondsey, London Borough of Southwark', *Architects' Journal* (6 August 1969), pp. 316–8. And for the repeating of this design in the two point blocks on the Somerset Estate, Wandsworth see for example, 'G. L. C. housing, Wandsworth', *Architect & Building News* (25 October 1967), pp. 689–92.

69 See for example <http://35percent.org/blog/2014/07/23/mystery-objector-1301/> (accessed 16 May 2018). As 35percent report, 'But more worrying is the Council's response on page 109, where it states that it has "recommended a lower CIL rate in the lower value area of the Borough, within which the majority of housing estates identified for Estate renewal are located"'. Thirty-five per cent refers to p. 109 of www.southwark.gov.uk/.../cdcil5_appendix_i_of_regulation_19_consultation_statement. CIL stands for Community Infrastructure Levy.

70 See <http://www.savills.co.uk/news/article/72418/175241-0/4/2014/savills-research--london-regeneration-research-proposal> For specific reports see for example <http://pdf.euro.savills.co.uk/residential---other/spotlight-public-land.pdf> (accessed 16 May 2018).

71 See <http://pdf.savills.com/documents/Foreword%20by%20Community%20Secretary,%20Eric%20Pickles%20and%20the%20regeneration%20research%20proposal.pdf> (accessed 16 May 2018).

72 For recent research on this contentious topic, see the following report <http://www.engineering.ucl.ac.uk/engineering-exchange/files/2014/10/Report-Refurbishment-Demolition-Social-Housing.pdf> (accessed 16 May 2018).

73 A good definition of social rented housing is given here: <https://www.gov.uk/definitions-of-general-housing-terms#social-and-affordable-housing>. David Roberts's doctoral research examines a general shift in terminology over the twentieth century from municipal to state to public to council to social to affordable housing. He notes that since the UK Coalition Government's National Policy Planning Framework in April 2012, social rented housing is defined as a subsidiary of affordable housing: 'Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market'. He also comments on how a number of councils, charities and organisations have strongly challenged this move, stating that there is no evidence base to prove that the affordable rent product would meet the same housing needs as social rent. However, the Mayor of London ratified this change in The London Plan. The following spreadsheet gives the percentage of affordable housing provision in the UK's biggest developments. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0A11Cy1H3n8gpdFZZMD1Y1FpR2tnVUtVOGJOeHJHc1E&usp=sharing#gid=0> (accessed 31 July 2015). See David Roberts, 'An Example of International Common Purpose', in Peter Guillery and David Kroll (eds), *Mobilising Housing Histories: Learning from London's Past for a Sustainable Future* (2017).

74 For a mapping of the displacement of tenants and leaseholders from Southwark's Heygate Estate, see Loretta Lees, Just Space, and SNAG (Southwark Notes Archives Group) 'The Social Cleansing of Council Estates in London', Ben Campkin, David Roberts and Rebecca Ross (eds), *Regeneration Realities: Urban Pamphleteer*, n. 2 (2014). See also Ben Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013), especially pp. 77–107.

75 Compulsory Purchase Orders are issued to those same residents that the Councils earlier sold 125-year leases under the 'right to buy'. As one recent legal case shows, urban blight is currently calculated to reduce the value of a property for sale by only 10%. See for example <https://southwarknotes.wordpress.com/aylesbury-estate/> (accessed 16 May 2018) and

<http://35percent.org/blog/2014/05/30/aylesbury-leaseholder-fights-incestuous-valuation/> (accessed 16 May 2018).

76 See for example http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/10023/masterplan_report (accessed 16 May 2018); <https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=8D90ED9EB7AF0CB1!213&ithint=file%2c.pdf&app=WordP&authkey=!AFw1hJdht5YEknw> (accessed 16 May 2018); <https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=8D90ED9EB7AF0CB1!222&ithint=file%2c.docx&app=Word&authkey=!AHLmm9xcbO-ITSM> (accessed 16 May 2018); <http://jamescousins.com/2014/02/future-alton-estate/> (accessed 16 May 2018); and <http://www.putneysw15.com/default.asp?section=community&app=forum/ShowMessage.asp?ID=972755> (accessed 16 May 2018); and <http://www.altonwatch.org.uk/rspd-uploads.html> (accessed 16 May 2018).

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79 See *Building The Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture 1915–1935*, Sackler Wing of Galleries, Royal Academy of Arts, London (29 October 2011–22 January 2012), and Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin (5 April–8 July 2012). See also the accompanying publication, Jean-Louis and Christina Lodder, *Building the Revolution: Soviet Art and Architecture 1915–1935* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2011).

80 See 'A Soviet Design for Life': *The Catherine Cooke Collection of 20th-Century Russian Architecture and Design*, The Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, which opened in July 2012. See <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/exhibitions/Cooke/> (accessed 16 May 2018).

81 See *High Society*, RIBA, 66 Portland Place London (16 February–9 June 2012). 'Using vintage imagery from the RIBA's collections, this exhibition explored five classic post-war high-rise housing schemes from across the UK, including: The Alton Estate — Roehampton, Churchill Gardens — Pimlico, Park Hill — Sheffield, Hutchesontown — Glasgow and Thamesmead — London. Complementing *A Place to Call Home: Where We Live and Why*, it explored in detail the intense period of experimentation and architectural daring that coloured the British post-war years'. See <http://www.architecture.com/WhatsOn/Exhibitions/Pastexhibitions.aspx> (accessed 16 May 2018).

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83 Jane Rendell, 'Residues of a Dream World', Gerrie van Noord (ed.), *To Have and to Hold: Future of a Contested Landscape* (Glasgow: NVA, 2011). 'In 2012, NVA began working in partnership with the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Strathclyde on the Invisible College, a research network which aims to radically reinvent the college's original teaching function for the present day. A 'college

without walls', the Invisible College has involved organised events bringing together academics, local residents, architects, artists and other interested parties on site for debate, discussion and collaborative investigations in the landscape'. See http://www.glasgowarchitecture.co.uk/cardross_seminary.htm (accessed 16 May 2018).