

*The Setting and the Social Condenser: Transitional Objects in Architecture and Psychoanalysis*

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This essay focuses on ‘transitional’ objects and spaces – located in the overlap between inside and outside. I position next to one another textual accounts of two specific kinds of transitional objects and spaces, the setting of psychoanalysis and the social condenser of architecture, in order to create a place of potential overlap in the mind of the reader. One textual strand is located in psychoanalysis and charts a particular set of ideas around transitional objects and spaces. It starts out with D. W. Winnicott’s notion of the transitional object of the first relationship, and the transitional space it occupies between the internal psyche and external world; moving 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; before returning to Sigmund Freud, the originator of psychoanalysis, to reflect on how the first object is also the lost object in his work on mourning and melancholia; in order to introduce Jean Laplanche’s critique of Freud’s distinction between word-presentations which exist in the conscious mind, and thing-presentations which exist in the unconscious, and his own concept of the ‘enigmatic message’ and thing-like presentations those objects which signify ‘to’ someone rather than ‘of’ something.

The other textual strand of the essay is grounded in architecture and examines transitional space in terms of the social condenser, a foundational principle in Moisei Ginzburg and Ignatii Milinis’s Narkomfin Communal House (1928-9) in Moscow, a building whose design was influenced by Le Corbusier’s five point plan, but which in turn inspired aspects of Le Corbusier’s *Unité d’Habitation* (1947-1952) in Marseilles thirty years later. Certain principles of the *Unité* were then adopted and adapted in the public housing schemes of the post-war Welfare State in the United Kingdom, specifically by the London County Council Architects Department in the Alton West Estate, Roehampton, London SW15, (1954-1958).

My aim is not explain the relation between these three architectural spaces, the architects and cultures that produced them and those that inhabited them, but to position the

transition from one architectural space to another, next to a sequence of theoretical insights drawn from psychoanalysis concerning the transitional spaces which exist in the relationships between a subject and his/her objects. The overlapping space between architecture and culture operates on many levels, through the triangular structures which take place between a subject and his/her object(s): perhaps between an architect and his/her imagined and/or built objects; or in the relation between one building and another in the space mediated by the user and the historian; and on the page, between the critic who writes and the reader who comes later to experience those words.

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### The Transitional Object or Object of the First Relationship (1951)

‘I have introduced the terms ‘transitional object’ and ‘transitional phenomena’ for designation of the intermediate area of experience, between the thumb and the teddy bear, between the oral erotism and true object-relationship, between primary creative activity and projection of what has already been introjected, between primary unawareness of indebtedness and the acknowledgement of indebtedness.’<sup>i</sup>

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.<sup>ii</sup> In continuing to explore the internal world of the subject, their work can be thought of as a continuation of Sigmund Freud’s research, but there are also important differences, particularly in the way that the instincts are conceptualised and the relative importance assigned to the mother and father in the development of the infant. Developing the concept of an object relation to describe how bodily drives satisfy their need, Freud theorised the instincts as pleasure-seeking, but Ronald Fairbairn, an influential member of the Independent Group, suggested instead that they were object-seeking, that the libido is not primarily aimed at pleasure but at making relationships with others. For Melanie Klein too, objects play a decisive role in the development of a subject and can be either part-

objects, like the breast, or whole-objects, like the mother. But whereas for Freud, it is the relationship with the father that retrospectively determines the relationship with the mother, for Klein, it is the experience of separation from the first object, the breast that determines all later experiences.<sup>iii</sup>

Following on and also developing aspects of Klein's work, 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.<sup>iv</sup> 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'.<sup>v</sup>

'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.'<sup>vi</sup>

The Narkomfin Communal House, Moscow (1928-1929)

‘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.’<sup>vii</sup>

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 organization can be a negative catalyst, it can also be a positive one’.<sup>viii</sup> 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.<sup>ix</sup>

This constructivist design methodology was developed in the designs for apartment types ‘A-F’ for STROIKOM, the Russian Building Committee, and then realized in six schemes, including the Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow, designed by Ginzburg with Milinis in 1928-1929.<sup>x</sup> 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.<sup>xi</sup> 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.’<sup>xii</sup>

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.<sup>xiii</sup> 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.<sup>xiv</sup>

‘The Narkomfin Communal House was not designed as a fully fledged *Don Kommuna* but as a ‘social condenser’ of the transitional type.’<sup>xv</sup>

#### The Analytic Object or the Space of ‘Overlap’ demarcated by the Analytic Setting

‘When I put forward the model of the double limit ... Two fields were thus defined: that of the intrapsychic on the inside, resulting from the relations between the parts comprising it, and that of the intersubjective, between inside and outside, whose development involves a relationship to the other.’<sup>xvi</sup>

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).<sup>xvii</sup> 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’.<sup>xviii</sup>

In a discussion of Freud’s method, Winnicott distinguished the technique from the ‘setting in which this work is carried out’.<sup>xix</sup> In Winnicott’s view, it is the setting which allows the reproduction of the ‘early and earliest mothering techniques’ in

psychoanalysis.<sup>xx</sup> While Italian psychoanalyst Luciana Nissin Momigliano describes how Winnicott ‘defined the “setting” as the sum of all the details of management that are more or less accepted by all psychoanalysts’,<sup>xxi</sup> Argentinian psychoanalyst José Bleger redefined Winnicott’s term setting to include the totality of the ‘psychoanalytic situation’ – the process – what is studied, analyzed and interpreted – and the non-process or frame – an institution, which he argues provides a set of constants or limits to the ‘behaviours’ that occur within it.<sup>xxii</sup> Other analysts have used slightly different spatial terms to describe the setting, including for Jean Laplanche, a double-walled tub, where the outside wall is contractual but necessary for preserving the inner wall, which is subject to the uncertainties of the analytic process,<sup>xxiii</sup> and for André Green, it is a casing or casket which holds the ‘jewel’ of the psychoanalytic process.<sup>xxiv</sup> 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’,<sup>xxv</sup> and is formed through the analytic association between analyst and analysand.<sup>xxvi</sup>

‘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.’<sup>xxvii</sup>

#### *Unité d'Habitation*, Marseilles (1947-1952)

‘Narkomfin's elevation on round reinforced concrete columns was certainly influenced by him [Le Corbusier]. In turn, Le Corbusier in the late 1940s used Narkofim's split-level duplex apartments in his famous *Unités d'Habitation*.’<sup>xxviii</sup>

The ‘slab block’ of the *Unité d'Habitation* was designed by Le Corbusier and built between 1947-1953 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 swimming pool for children and a gymnasium.<sup>xxix</sup>

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,<sup>xxx</sup> and first most fully first realized in the *Villa Savoye* ((1929–1931), as well as the urban scale projects of *La Ville Contemporaine* (1922) and *La Ville Radieuse* (1935).

Le Corbusier made visits in the mid to late 1920s to the Soviet Union to study the architecture,<sup>xxxi</sup> and was inspired by a number of aspects of the Narkomfin design: including its innovative section with its central axis – *rue intérieure*, the variable range in possible apartment types, including one with double height living space, and the provision of communal facilities. At the same time, Ginzburg and other Soviet constructivists in the early 1920s had read articles by Le Corbusier,<sup>xxxii</sup> and references to Le Corbusier's five-point plan are evident in the design of Narkomfin.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

To focus on the creative overlap between the two schemes in terms of the borrowing of innovative architectural design features from each other is interesting, but to consider this alone 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, and the differing ways in which they understood the relation between architecture and revolution. 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 radicalization of architecture through new industrialized forms and processes was celebrated in order to develop the newly formed Bolshevik state based on socialist principles.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Architectural historian Jean-Louis Cohen, who has studied Le Corbusier's relation to Soviet architecture in great depth, notes that in 1928 at the first OSA conference, Ginzburg criticized Le Corbusier's design

solutions, noting they were ‘poorly defined’ and ‘purely aesthetic’.<sup>xxxv</sup> While 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’.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

### A Generalised Triangular Structure with Variable Thirds

‘The object is thus situated in two places: it belongs both to the internal space on the two levels of the conscious and the unconscious, and it is also present in the external space as object, as other, as another subject.’<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Green notes that the transitional space of the setting has a ‘specificity of its own’, which differs from both outside and inner space.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Michael Parsons, in a commentary on Green’s work, draws attention to his understanding of the analytic setting not as a static tableau, but as a space of engagement, not as ‘just a representation of psychic structure’, but as ‘an expression of it’.<sup>xxxix</sup> Parsons explains that for Green: ‘It is the way psychic structure expresses itself, and cannot express itself, through the structure of the setting, that makes the psychoanalytic situation psychoanalytic’.<sup>xl</sup>

Green understands this as a spatial construction, as a ‘generalised triangular structure with variable third’.<sup>xli</sup> 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’. In conversation with Green, Gregorio Kohon suggests that he is trying to ‘make sense of this mad passion for the mother within an Oedipal constellation, but the mad passion for the mother does not include the mother at all. It only includes the unknown object of bereavement, which can be the text created, or the painting, or the piece of music’.<sup>xlii</sup>

In *Shadow of the Other*, Jessica Benjamin has argued that the dialogue between mother and child can take the place of ‘Jacques Lacan’s third term that breaks the dyad’; instead of thinking of the maternal dyad as a trap with no way out, Benjamin understands the dialogue itself to be a third co-created by two subjects.<sup>xliii</sup> She



maintains that while the intrapsychic perspective continuously reverses through identification, the intersubjective view aims to create a third position ‘that is able to break up the reversible complementarities and hold in tension the polarities that underly them’.<sup>xliv</sup> Rather than a person located outside the dyad, the third may therefore be considered a function, for example, to symbolize. And as Green emphasizes:

‘the structure is triangular but it doesn’t mean that it is Oedipal. The third can be, for instance, art’.<sup>xlv</sup>

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.<sup>xlvi</sup>

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.<sup>xlvii</sup> Community facilities were provided in the form of schools – nursery, primary and comprehensive – a surgery, shops and a library.<sup>xlviii</sup>

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’.<sup>xlix</sup> 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 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 it was for economic reasons that the traditional English access balcony replaced the *rue intérieure*.<sup>1</sup> 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 dwelling types had produced a lack of coherent structure at a community level:

‘If communities are to exist in high buildings, then it is necessary that there are community and service activities related to the group structure of those communities.’<sup>ii</sup>

#### Thing-Like Presentations or the ‘Waste’ Products of Translation

‘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*).’<sup>iii</sup>

The psychoanalytic concept of the lost object is introduced in the work of Freud in relation to two stages of loss, first the loss of the mother’s breast and then her whole person.<sup>iii</sup> 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’.<sup>liv</sup>

Critical of the way Freud opposes thing-presentations and word-presentations,<sup>lv</sup> Laplanche proposes a process of translation–repression comprising two phases. The first involves ‘inscription’ or the ‘implanting’ of what he calls ‘enigmatic signifiers’, messages,<sup>lvi</sup> from the mother that contain aspects of her unconscious, and the second entails the reactivation of certain traumatic signifiers which the subject attempts to

bind or symbolize.<sup>lvii</sup> Failure to do this results in the repression of residue elements, that are not capable of signifying or communicating anything but themselves. Laplanche calls these untranslatable signifiers ‘thing-like presentations’ (*représentation-chose*) in order to show that the unconscious element is not a representation or trace of an external thing. ‘Thing-like presentations’ are not representations *of* things, but representations that are *like* things.

For Laplanche, ‘the passage to the unconscious is correlative with a loss of referentiality’.<sup>lviii</sup> In his account repression – the negative side of the translation of the enigmatic message – produces dislocation.<sup>lix</sup> It is an effect of the process of repression, ‘a partial and failed translation’, that the ‘preconscious presentation-of-the-thing (*Sachvorstellung, représentation de chose*) is transformed into an unconscious presentation-as-a-mental-thing (*représentation-chose*) or thing-like presentation, a designified signifier’.<sup>lx</sup> Laplanche describes this unconscious residue as having a ‘reified and alien materiality’.<sup>lxi</sup> As a message it signifies ‘to’ someone rather than ‘of’ something, since despite the loss of its signified, this thing-like presentation can still communicate to an addressee, verbally and non-verbally, through gesture.<sup>lxii</sup> As John Fletcher maintains, Laplanche’s model of translation-repression rethinks the problem of unconscious representation by understanding repressed elements, not as memories or copies of past events, but as remainders or ‘waste’ products of translations.<sup>lxiii</sup>

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.<sup>lxiv</sup>

The Narkomfin, Again, but from Somewhere Else

The fact that Narkomfin failed in its function as communal housing also explains why it has been neglected over the years. The building never achieved the communality that Ginzburg intended for it: the balcony on the

first floor intended for conversation quickly became storage space; the roof garden was never completed and the communal dining room barely used. By the mid thirties the canteen was being little used and was closed. People used their small kitchen niches in their own apartments. The increasing paranoia of Stalin's Russia affected the inhabitants of Narkomfin, after all they worked together and lived together. The Finance Commissariat was one of the more dangerous places to work in the 1930s and there were denunciations which led to arrests in Narkomfin.<sup>lxv</sup>

While Bullock has focused on describing the loss of certain design principles vital to Le Corbusier's *Unité* in the process of reformulating the project for London's public housing provision, he fails to mention the debt that both the *Unité* and Alton West owed to the Narkomfin. Omitting reference to the Narkomfin and its social condenser results in an argument that defines the relation between architecture and revolution in Le Corbusier's terms and vacates the political imperative at the heart of the design. Yet the process of retracing those elements, which have been lost, that have slipped through the two-phase translation – from Moscow to Marseilles, and then from Marseilles to London – is perhaps not simply one of refinding those objects discarded because the recipients did not value them for their original political and cultural context. There is also the issue of repression and dislocation to consider.

According to Buchli, by 1930, there was a call in the Soviet Union for the rapid proletarianization of the architectural profession, and VOPRA, a group opposing OSA, called for the admission of students of proletarian origin over those of bourgeois origin, attacking constructivist for its formalism and developing instead a distinctly Stalinist style based on classicism. The full socialization of the family life planned for in schemes such as Narkomfin was condemned and a publication, *Concerning Work on the Restructuring of Everyday Life*, demanded the reassessment of *byt* reform and only partial socialization. The Council of People's Commissars were to produce proposals for the design of settlements with individual houses for workers, and although laundry facilities, dining rooms, bathhouses, schooling and day care were to be collectivized, the attempts in projects like the Narkomfin to socialize child rearing and make the family home more minimal were criticised, instead the

‘segregated petit-bourgeois hearth where nuclear families would live and rear their children was to remain intact’.<sup>lxvi</sup>

Buchli argues that under the pressure of an increasingly hostile government the Narkomfin was considered part of the discredited left and ‘Trotskyite’ thinking, and the pilotis taken as a sign of constructivism.<sup>lxvii</sup> By the mid 1930s the area under the pilotis was filled in with apartments with prerevolutionary plans, the communal block was altered, the bridge connecting communal block and living block sealed off and converted into labourers’ dormitories, and the laundry facility reworked into offices. Under the external pressure Ginzburg himself began to criticize and deny the value of his own earlier work at the Narkomfin, Buchli quotes him as commenting on the design that:

‘The forms of socialist life were not understood in dialectic terms, in movement, but in some sort of uniform and unchanging order ... only in the sleeping cabins is the self allowed to develop.’<sup>lxviii</sup>

Winnicott’s Transitional Object, Again, but in a Different Place

‘To use an object the subject must have developed a *capacity* to use objects. This is part of the change to the reality principle.’<sup>lxix</sup>

In his 1968 paper ‘The Use of an Object’, Winnicott describes how ‘relating may be to a subjective object, but usage implies that the object is part of external reality’.<sup>lxx</sup> For Winnicott, to use an object is to take into account its objective reality or existence as ‘a thing in itself’ rather than its subjective reality or existence as a projection. The change from relating to using is for him significant, it ‘means that the subject destroys the object’: that the object stands outside the omnipotent control of the subject, recognized as the external object it has always been.<sup>lxxi</sup>

But what does it mean to ‘use’ an object – a concept, a building – rather than to relate to one? Commenting on the potential use of this essay by Winnicott, Juliet Mitchell argues that if one does not use theory, all one can do is apply it or question it ‘within

its own terms'.<sup>lxxii</sup> She argues, following Winnicott, that to use a theory we have to destroy it; and that when it survives it 'will be in a different place',<sup>lxxiii</sup> one where it is independent and therefore charged with the capacity of a 'use-object'.<sup>lxxiv</sup>

What kind of transitional object is the Narkomfin? Maybe it is too simple to think of it as a lost object or an object whose loss is to be mourned. In response to the Stalinist regime, its initial value was repressed by its architect and dislocated; and later in the two-phase translation of its elements on route from Moscow to London, via Marseilles, the social condenser was repositioned it as residual waste. Yet as a thing-like presentation, a message, it still communicates to its addressee, signifying 'to' us rather than 'of' the thing that has been lost. Perhaps the reconfiguring of its original principles in the *Unité* and Alton West, is not only a loss then, or a lack of recognition, but might be better considered a destruction, which has allowed the Narkomfin to resurface in a different place. Might it be possible to use this lost object, not by questioning it within its own terms or by applying it, but by charging it with the capacity to reactivate a new version of the social condenser for today?

This sequence can be observed: (1) Subject *relates* to object. (2) Object is in process of being found instead of placed by the subject in the world. (3) Subject *destroys* object. (4) Object survives destruction. (5) Subject can *use* object.<sup>lxxv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> 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, p. 89.

<sup>ii</sup> 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.

<sup>iii</sup> Klein describes the early stages of childhood development in terms of different 'positions'. The paranoid schizophrenic position characterises the child's state of oneness with the mother, where he or she relates to part-objects such as the mother's

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breast, as either good or bad, satisfying or frustrating. See Melanie Klein, 'Notes on Some Schizoid Mechanisms' (1946) *Envy and Gratitude and Other Worlds 1946–1963* (London: Virago, 1988) pp. 1–24. This position is replaced by a depressive stage where in recognising its own identity and that of the mother as a whole person, the child feels guilty for the previous aggression inflicted on the mother. See Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921–1945* (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1981).

<sup>iv</sup> Winnicott, 'Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena', 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. 711–716.

<sup>v</sup> See D. W. Winnicott, 'The Location of Cultural Experience', *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 48 (1967) pp. 368–372, p. 371. See also D. W. Winnicott: *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>vi</sup> Winnicott, 'The Location of Cultural Experience', pp. 371-2.

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

<sup>viii</sup> Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 38.

<sup>ix</sup> Catherine Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde: Theories of Art, Architecture and the City* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), p. 118.

<sup>x</sup> Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 44–5. See also Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism*. Oxford, 1999).

<sup>xi</sup> Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism*, p. 23.

<sup>xii</sup> Victor Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 57(2), (1998): pp. 160–181, p. 161.

<sup>xiii</sup> Buchli notes that the original design was the A-1 *Don Kommuna* entered in a competition and exhibition of *Don Kommuny* organized 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. See [http://www.e-noosphere.com/Noosphere/En/Magazine/Default.asp?File=20080108\\_Berkovich.htm](http://www.e-noosphere.com/Noosphere/En/Magazine/Default.asp?File=20080108_Berkovich.htm) (accessed 12 April 2011).

<sup>xiv</sup> Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 162.

<sup>xv</sup> Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 162.

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<sup>xvi</sup> André Green, 'The Intrapsychic and Intersubjective in Psychoanalysis', *Psychoanalysis Quarterly* v. 69 (2000) pp. 1–39, p. 3.

<sup>xvii</sup> 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. 121–144, 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. 112–139.

<sup>xviii</sup> Freud, 'On Beginning the Treatment', p. 134.

<sup>xix</sup> 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.

<sup>xx</sup> Winnicott, 'Metapsychological and Clinical Aspects of Regression', p. 21.

<sup>xxi</sup> Luciana Nissin Momigliano, 'The Analytic Setting; a Theme with Variations', *Continuity and Change in Psychoanalysis: Letters from Milan* (London and New York: Karnac Books, 1992) pp. 33–61, pp. 33–34. Momigliano points out that in Italy the term 'setting' is used in the Winnicottian sense to 'indicate a safe and constant framework within which the psychoanalytic process evolves', whereas in Anglo-Saxon language this is currently called the 'frame'.

<sup>xxii</sup> José Bleger, 'Psycho-Analysis of the Psycho-Analytic Frame', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, v. 48 (1967) pp. 511–519, p. 518.

<sup>xxiii</sup> The French term used is '*baquet*'. See Jean Laplanche, 'Transference: its Provocation by the Analyst' [1992] translated by Luke Thurston, *Essays on Otherness*, edited by John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 214–233, p. 226, note.

<sup>xxiv</sup> The French word used is '*écriin*'. See André Green, *Key Ideas for a Contemporary Psychoanalysis: Misrecognition and Recognition of the Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 2005) p. 33, note.

<sup>xxv</sup> 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. 169–189, p. 180.

<sup>xxvi</sup> André Green, 'The Analyst, Symbolization and Absence in the Analytic Setting (On Changes in Analytic Practice and Analytic Experience) – In Memory of D. W. Winnicott', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* v. 56 (1975) pp. 1–22, p. 12.



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<sup>xxvii</sup> Green, 'Potential Space in Psychoanalysis', p. 180.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Franziska Bollerey and Axel Föhl, 'Architecture of the Avant Garde: Icons and Iconoclasts' p. 46. [http://www.maps-moscow.com/userdata/part\\_01.pdf](http://www.maps-moscow.com/userdata/part_01.pdf) (accessed 12 April 2011).

<sup>xxix</sup> 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. 172–187. See also Alban Janson and Carsten Krohn, *Le Corbusier, Unité d'habitation, Marseilles*, (London and Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 2007).

<sup>xxx</sup> 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.

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

<sup>xxxii</sup> Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 38-9 and Cooke, *Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 122.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> 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 12 April 2011).

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Cohen quotes in great detail a letter to Moscow architects published in *Stroikelnaiia 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.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Cohen, *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR*, pp. 114-5.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> See Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture* (1923), p. x. 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'.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Green, 'The Intrapsychic and Intersubjective in Psychoanalysis', p. 3.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> André Green and Gregorio Kohon 'The Greening of Psychoanalysis: André Green in Dialogues with Gregorio Kohon', Gregorio Kohon (ed.) *The Dead Mother: The Work of André Green* (London: Routledge, published in association with the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1999) pp. 10–58, p. 29.

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<sup>xxxix</sup> Michael Parsons, 'Psychic Reality, Negation, and the Analytic Setting', Kohon (ed.) *The Dead Mother*, pp. 59–75, p. 74.

<sup>xi</sup> Parsons, 'Psychic Reality', p. 74.

<sup>xli</sup> Green and Kohon, 'The Greening of Psychoanalysis', p. 53.

<sup>xlii</sup> Green and Kohon, 'The Greening of Psychoanalysis', p. 53.

<sup>xliii</sup> Jessica Benjamin, *Shadow of the Other: Intersubjectivity and Gender in Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1998) p. 28, note 5. Benjamin originally made this argument in Jessica Benjamin, 'The Omnipotent Mother: A Psychoanalytic Study of Fantasy and Reality', *Like Subjects/Love Objects* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) pp. 81–113, especially pp. 96–97.

<sup>xliiv</sup> Benjamin, *Shadow of the Other*, p. xiv.

<sup>xliv</sup> Green and Kohon, 'The Greening of Psychoanalysis', p. 53.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 58.

<sup>xlvii</sup> 'Alton Estate (W) Roehampton Lane, London, SW15', *The Architect's Journal* (5 November, 1959) pp. 461-478.

<sup>xlviii</sup> 'Housing at Priory Lane, Roehampton, SW15', *Architectural Design* (January 1959), pp. 7-21.

<sup>xlix</sup> Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-War World: Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 102–107.

<sup>l</sup> Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block*, p. 58.

<sup>li</sup> 'Housing at Priory Lane, Roehampton, SW15', p. 21.

<sup>lii</sup> See Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', [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. 237–258, pp. 255-6.

<sup>liii</sup> See Sigmund Freud, 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality', [1905d] *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume VII (1901-1905): A Case of Hysteria, Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955) pp. 123-243 and Sigmund Freud, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' [1920] *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVIII (1920-1922): Beyond the Pleasure Principle*,

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*Group Psychology and Other Works* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955) pp. 1–64.  
See also Freud, ‘Mourning and Melancholia’.

<sup>liv</sup> Freud, ‘Mourning and Melancholia’, pp. 255-6.

<sup>lv</sup> Jean Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise on the Unconscious’ [1993] translated by Luke Thurston, *Essays on Otherness*, edited by John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 84–116, p. 92, note 20.

<sup>lvi</sup> Laplanche explains that he uses the term message since it indicates the non-verbal as well as the verbal, and also because, unlike language, it does not ‘efface the alterity of the other in favour of trans-individual structures’. See Jean Laplanche, ‘The Unfinished Copernican Revolution’ [1992] translated by Luke Thurston, *Essays on Otherness*, edited by John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 52–83, p. 73. Like Laplanche, André Green has taken issue with Jacques Lacan’s formula: ‘the unconscious is structured like a language’. Green posits that the unconscious ‘is structured like an affective language, or like an affectivity having the properties of language’. Green’s position, again following Freud’s, is that if the unconscious, opposed to the pre-conscious, is constituted by thing-presentations as Freud suggests then what is ‘related to language can only belong to the pre-conscious’. See Green ‘Potential Space in Psychoanalysis’, p. 186 and Green and Kohon, ‘The Greening of Psychoanalysis’, p. 24.

<sup>lvii</sup> Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 93.

<sup>lviii</sup> Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 90.

<sup>lix</sup> Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 104.

<sup>lx</sup> Jean Laplanche, ‘The Drive and its Source-Object: its Fate in the Transference’ [1992] translated by Leslie Hill, *Essays on Otherness*, edited by John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 117–132, pp. 120–121, note 6.

<sup>lxi</sup> Laplanche, ‘The Drive’, pp. 120–121, note 6.

<sup>lxii</sup> Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 91. John Fletcher notes that in ‘signifying to’ Laplanche is ‘alluding to’ Jacques Lacan, who distinguished between a signifier of something, a meaning or signified, and a signifier to someone, an addressee. See Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 91, note 18, editor’s comment. Laplanche refers explicitly to Lacan’s model of language, but dismisses it as ‘only applicable to a perfect, well-made, univocal language’ and takes up instead the ‘full extension’ Freud gives to language which includes gesture and other kinds of expression of psychological activity. Laplanche, ‘A Short Treatise’, p. 92.

<sup>lxiii</sup> John Fletcher, ‘Introduction: Psychoanalysis and the Question of the Other’, Jean Laplanche, *Essays on Otherness*, edited by John Fletcher (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 1–51, p. 37.

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<sup>lxiv</sup> Laplanche, 'The Unfinished Copernican Revolution', p. 71, note 37. Here the reader is referred to Jean Laplanche, *New Foundations for Psychoanalysis* [1987] translated by David Macey (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989) pp. 130–133.

<sup>lxv</sup> <http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/clementine-cecil/narkomfin-building-life-after-luzhkov> (accessed 12 April 2011).

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<sup>lxvi</sup> Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 165.

<sup>lxvii</sup> Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 177.

<sup>lxviii</sup> Buchli, 'Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow', p. 175.

<sup>lxix</sup> Winnicott, 'The Use of an Object', p. 713.

<sup>lxx</sup> Winnicott, 'The Use of an Object', p. 715.

<sup>lxxi</sup> Winnicott, 'The Use of an Object', p. 713.

<sup>lxxii</sup> Mitchell, 'Theory as an Object', p. 29.

<sup>lxxiii</sup> Juliet Mitchell, 'Theory as an Object', *October*, v. 113 (Summer 2005) pp. 29–38, p. 32.

<sup>lxxiv</sup> Mitchell, 'Theory as an Object', p. 33.

<sup>lxxv</sup> Winnicott, 'The Use of an Object', p. 715.