

Title: Exposing the Unconscious through the Para-architectural Photo-Essay and Prose

Abstract:

Para-architecture as a method of design exploits the creative potential within interdisciplinary practices such as philosophy, sculpture, cartoons, as a supplement to conventional design methodologies. This photo essay expands upon such methods originally highlighted within Bernard Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* (1976), in a parallel to unconscious principles of psychoanalytic 'site-writing', as proposed by Jane Rendell. Responding to the Hepworth Wakefield, United Kingdom, as the architectural object, photography and intuitive prose are explored as para-architectural tools of interrogation. Through an original series of photographs and developed prose, a diagnosis and analysis takes place – harnessing the potential of utilizing para-architectural methods to explore the unconscious of cultural architectural interventions. The future potential in subscribing to para-architectural inquiry affords for design ideologies and pedagogy within the discipline to advance the dimensions of prescriptive architecture; encouraging creative responses, whilst also considering the unseen cognitive burdens architecture often places onto communities, cultures, and cities.

Keywords: Para-architecture, unconscious; photo-essay; Jane Rendell, Bernard Tschumi

Introduction

The coalescent relationship between architecture and culture has remained a favoured method for cities to be reimagined and reinvented for the modern age. For example, *The V & A Design Museum*, Dundee, Scotland, by Kengo Kuma & Associates has the potential to announce the city to a much-wider audience and spearhead investment into the local economy, focusing on the city's waterfront for re-development; the archetypal blueprint being created 20 years prior by Frank O. Gehry's and the *Museo Guggenheim Bilbao*. The desire for showpiece, landmark or signature structures—in the typology of concert halls, art and design museums, theatres, or art objects—continue to spearhead master plans and dictate distinctive cityscapes under the guise of 'place-making'. In

fact, such typologies continue in highly-developed cities, with New York's recent privately-funded Hudson Yards development utilizing Heatherwick Studio's controversial *Vessel* as a central focus of the district; a cultural landmark-cum-sculptural showpiece.

Where cities are essential modulators and regulators in the attitudes and psyches of individuals, the process of revitalization within the urban grain involves analysis of the cognitive effects of architectural interventions. As Sarah Williams Goldhagen suggests, "not just conscious thoughts, but non-conscious impressions, feedback from our senses, physical movement, and even split-second mental stimulations of that movement shapes [sic] how we respond to a place. In turn, the place nudges us to think or behave in certain ways."¹ Whilst contemporary architectural practice continues to incorporate models of multi-disciplinary practice in designing spaces and places, a radical methodological opportunity exists to resist purely virtual dimensions, considering the ontological unconscious encountered within reimagined and redeveloped urban fabrics. The following photo-essay and intuitive-led prose present a methodology to unite the disciplines of architecture and psychoanalysis through the process of observation, diagnosis, and treatment; echoing Tim Martin's stance that, "...diagnosis [...] stands today as one of the more urgent and important interdisciplinary methodological hurdles between architecture and psychoanalysis."²

In order to expose moments of contemplation between the architectural object and its context, the development of the photo-essay can begin to mediate between unconscious interpretations and the resolution to an anxiety of the place. Here the photos become still representations of the unconscious city, isolating aesthetics, typologies, economies, or function, become a frame of interpretation resembling one's unconscious mind. The addition of intuitive-led in-situ prose, extends this concept further, but works as an inverse of the conscious image; constructing language from its unconscious in a Lacanian manner. This process resembles the landscape artist Robert Smithson in some respects, who claimed, "I think all perception is tainted with a kind of psychoanalytic

¹ Sarah Williams Goldhagen, cited in Amanda Kolson Hurley, "This Is Your Brain on Architecture." *CityLab*. (New York: CityLab, 2017).

² Timothy Martin, "Psychoanalytic Diagnosis in Architecture and Urban Design," in *Architecture and the Unconscious*, J. Hendrix, and L. Holm (London: Ashgate Press, 2016) 10.

reading. In other words, somebody who's having Oedipal problems, it's going to come out in the perception, or it's going to come out in the making, the kind of work they choose to do.”³ Whilst this method may appear simple, it addresses the ideology present in architectural design of conceiving improvements of place through solely conscious methods; for example, the conventional CAD-design processes of producing plans, elevations, modelling, master planning, or iconicity. Such vulnerable methods can become “a screen that block[s] [sic] an unconscious,”⁴ concealing the larger issue behind the regeneration of place; ‘*What are the unconscious implications caused [or ignored, through CAD, plans, etc.] by such an object [the resultant architecture]?*’ In adopting a para-architectural approach to the conventional site visit, here photographs are juxtaposed with intuitive-driven prose to meditate between architectural drawing? semantics and the unseen unconscious drivers of what? within urban fabrics. It is anticipated that the photo-essay and prose, as a working methodology, illuminates relations between the intuitive unconscious experienced in *one's own* relationship, in the presence of the architecture's *own* unconscious. That is to say, the prose works to articulate the language of the unconscious through an exteriorization of the primary aesthetic dimension of the photo-essay. By committing to this methodology, an interpretation of Lacan's linguistic reading of the entire psychoanalytic edifice takes place, encapsulated by what is perhaps his single best-known adage; ‘The unconscious is structured as a language.’⁵ As this is usually understood as pointing towards a semiotic reinterpretation of psychoanalytic theory and practice,⁶ the combined solution of the photo-essay and intuitively-driven, but ultimately unconscious, prose takes hold, illuminating the cognitive dimension between the unconscious of community and architectural intervention. Serving as the theoretical foundation for the photo-essay, Jane Rendell has expanded upon this dimension throughout her career, aligning psychoanalysis with architecture.

³ Lucy R, Lippard, “Lucy R, Lippard Talks about Eva Hesse with Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson”, *Artforum*. February 2008. Recorded on June 5, 1973,

⁴ Timothy Martin, “Psychoanalytic Diagnosis in Architecture and Urban Design,” in *Architecture and the Unconscious*, J. Hendrix, and L. Holm (London: Ashgate Press, 2016) 10.

⁵ Slavoj Žižek, *How to read Lacan*, (London: Granta Publications, 2006) 2-3.

⁶ Slavoj Žižek, *Interrogating the Real*, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005) 113.

Background Theory

Jane Rendell, posits that “a strong psychoanalytical perspective sought to unite the disciplines to involve considering both how psychoanalysis operates in architecture, and how architecture operates in psychoanalysis.”⁷ In 2006, Rendell expanded upon questions of spatiality in line with critical theory made famous by the Frankfurt School’s thinkers on theory and philosophy. Operating at the beginning of the 20th century, the group included Theodor Adorno, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse and Walter Benjamin; connected by their interest in the ideas of the philosopher G.W.F. Hegel, the political economist Karl Marx, and the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud.⁸ Rendell sought to expand upon their work, declaring her own role as a contemporary critic to negotiate the interdisciplinary relationship between theory and practice. Rendell writes:

Rather than use theory to explain practice or practice to justify theory, the point (...) is to articulate practices that operate between art and architecture (...), I open up a place between art and architecture that allows works to be explored in relation to one another as forms of critical spatial practice.⁹

In 2017, critical spatial practice was described as an “embodied process of site-writing, in which the critic occupies a discrete position as a mediator, (...) that situatedness plays a part in conditioning the performance of his or her interpretive role.”¹⁰ Appropriating aspects of Henri Lefebvre’s *Le Droit à la Ville* (The Right to the City, published in 1968), where he insisted the city’s purpose “was to use the streets, squares, and monuments, and symbols of the city,”¹¹ –an observation that cannot exist without practising site-writing–Rendell echoes in part Jane Jacobs practice of site-writing while adding the psychoanalytic twist favoured by the Frankfurt School. Proposing the link between psychoanalytic analyses and the clinic of the city as setting, Rendell can

⁷ Jane Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, (London: IB Taurus and Co. 2017) 226.

⁸ Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture*, (London: IB Taurus and Co. 2006) 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 12

¹⁰ Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, 228.

¹¹ Joaquin Villanueva, “Rights,” in *Urban theory: new critical perspectives*, M. Jayne, and K. Ward, (London, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group., 2017) 257.

diagnose architecture as an analytic object; an object that is both static *and* fluid in architectural and psychoanalytic perspectives. Therefore, the process of site writing becomes a structured relationship across space and time—akin to the Lacanian unconscious ‘language’—allowing psychoanalysis to consider transitional spaces through the transdisciplinary practice of ‘site-writing.’¹²

Rendell’s object analysis also extends Bernard Tschumi’s approach to re-establish and revise the rules of social space, whilst simultaneously launching an interrogation of political hierarchies and fragmented nature of architecture. Dislocating architecture’s singular dimension of thinking, Tschumi’s post-structuralist philosophy fosters connections between space, program and movement to define sequences within architecture. Tschumi explains: “The hopelessness of architecture is thus; history, memory, and tradition, (...), become nothing but modes of disguise, fake regulations, so as to avoid the question of transience and temporality.”¹³

In his 1984 project *Parc de La Villette* in Paris, Tschumi creates a series of ‘follies’ for people to project their fantasies upon. Developing *bandes dessinées* (comic book strips) and axonometric exploration drawings within *The Manhattan Transcripts* gave rise to montage-like effects in developing designs and schemes for the project. Later layering “what can only be described as ‘codes,’ of exploded constructivist drawings developed [sic] a new series of languages in a convention that is plural but not eclectic.”¹⁴ This afforded an unpacking of the “veiled sadism behind paternalist social housing; the follies created a park for the neurotic, allowing local residents to decide how some of the follies would be developed according to their developing perceptions of their needs.”¹⁵ As Anthony Vidler has commented;

By dismantling the supposed rules of modernism demonstrated by the welfare housing, the fragmented unconscious or estrangement for those who lived, worked, and played, in *La Villette* it would be derived not by the simple

¹² Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, 226.

¹³ Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, (Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1996), 217.

¹⁴ Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays*, (Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press., 1999), 106.

¹⁵ Martin, “Psychoanalytic Diagnosis in Architecture and Urban Design,” 10.

manipulation of the internal codes of traditional or modern architecture, but rather by their confrontation with concepts drawn from outside architecture, from literature and philosophy, film and music.¹⁶

Adopting para-architectural methods provides a foundation to manoeuvre unconventional conflicts, linkages, variances, and possibilities within his projects. By extension, *Parc de La Villette* embodies “the deeply rooted ideals of transparency between form and function, sign and signifier, space and activity, structure and meaning, (...) forced into disassociation, induced to collide rather than coincide.”¹⁷ As a consequence, it resonates with the city ideals Netto speaks of some 20 years later, where collisions through para-architectural methods mediate the fragmented nature seen in architecture and the city, but also re-address the balance to assimilate differences.¹⁸

In contrast, Walter Benjamin observed para-architecture over the course of his *Arcades Project*, where para-architecture and plush interiors of the 19th century are seen as attempts to offer—in mask-like arabesques—a refuge for powerful desires that have been deprived of their traditional symbolism.¹⁹ I contend that Tschumi has re-formed Benjamin’s observation of para-architecture as a confluence of narratives and motifs, extending it outwards into program, structure, and context, as Tschumi explains; “I could take a program and dismantle it, cut it up, and reconfigure it in the same way I could with any visual material.”²⁰ Giving further theoretical foundation to such an ideology of para-architecture, Tschumi “began to read psychoanalytical texts in a very focused way to see what components could give ...[him] another view of specific architectural conditions or phenomena.”²¹ I, therefore propose that aligning Rendell’s site-writing-psychoanalytic-inquiry with the use of para-architectural methods allows for a more intuitive, and wider-reaching analysis to take place. It is a process that illuminates phenomena that may remain hidden to architectural practitioners, or,

¹⁶ Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays*, 106.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁸ Vinicius M. Netto, *The Social Fabric of Cities*, (London, Routledge, 2017), 98.

¹⁹ Winfried Menninghaus, “On the ‘Vital Significance’ of Kitsch: Walter Benjamin’s Politics of ‘Bad Taste’” in 2009. *Walter Benjamin and the architecture of modernity*. A., Benjamin, and C., Rice. (Melbourne: Re. Press, 2009) 63.

²⁰ Enrique Walker, and Bernard Tschumi, *Tschumi on architecture: conversations with Enrique Walker*. (New York, N.Y., Monacelli Press, 2006) 34

²¹ *Ibid.*, 50

disturbingly, the severe rejection of context or community needed throughout the design process. The access to such phenomena may appear confusing, however para-architectural methods is a solution that can only serve to compliment the work of the architectural practitioner.

Why Para-architectural?

The wider consequence of utilizing the para-architectural methods affords for the states of ego-ideal and the ideal-ego to be examined, but also a third quality: superego. The desire to impose superego provides a false semblance of a nice life which obliterates the truth.²² Often present in a de-realized subject, that being the disillusioned, or one suffering *unheimlich*—the protruding architectural intervention of place—the superego of the designer or viewer compounds unconscious and conscious interpretations of the city. For example, concepts of the ideal-ego (idealised view of how we wish to be perceived) and the ego-ideal (the agency I wish to impress with my ideal-ego image, the ideals I try to follow) escalate to the superego where one adheres to the same agency, but with the side-effecting qualities of becoming vengeful, sadistic and guilt inducing. This is a prescient quality within contemporary urban fabrics. As Vinicius Netto suggests; “City life involves a fundamental duality: it has the potential to sustain different individual life experiences and to relate them in modes of shared experiences that take the form of city life.”²³ This is also echoed by Rendell, who describes the individual experience of the city as “a spatial construction, but also a temporal process as a ‘setting as place.’”²⁴ If such duality is observed within the setting, the city, acting as a conduit for shared experience related by environments of temporal and spatial dimensions, one can begin to subscribe to the notion that the concepts of ideal-ego, ego-ideal, or superego, are projected by architectural interventions, resulting in unconscious demands for context and community. Therefore, the relationship between architecture and unconscious demands, extends to reveal issues in identity, place-making and parallaxical identities.²⁵

²² Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, (London, Verso Books, 2011) 273.

²³ Vinicius M. Netto, *The Social Fabric of Cities*, (London, Routledge, 2017) 98.

²⁴ Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, 119.

²⁵ Louis D’Arcy-Reed, “Observing Parallaxical Identities of Place in Architecture – Adopting Architectural and Psychoanalytical Approaches to Urban Fabrics,” *Journal of Architecture and*

However, adoption of reflexive, yet unconscious, observations through para-architectural practices—prose in parallel to the photo-essay—illuminates Rendell’s view that “allowing the political unconscious to surface demands engaging with the psychic dimension of architecture.”²⁶ Rendell’s contention also points to Vidler’s view of architecture as having an “ambiguous status somewhere between criticism and literature.”²⁷ The architecture becomes the analytic object as the object to be interrogated, and determined in an object-relational setting. In a re-alignment of the Lacanian unconscious structured as a language, Rendell’s surface demands become exposed, and *hardened* through the use of intuitive *and* unconscious prose. The unconscious prose connotes the visual dimension of the photo-essay, yet also the unseen, unconscious psychic dimension to the architecture.

The Photo-essay, Prose, and the Hepworth Wakefield

At the turn of the Millennium, the UK introduced a strategy of concentrating on cultural amenities in urban regeneration described by Suzanne MacLeod as “image improvement and the lifting of self esteem [sic] (...) one of the most political motivations for the windfall of millions from the new National Lottery.”²⁸ Walsall saw the first lottery funded institution in the guise of the New Art Gallery Walsall in the year 2000, heralding several new projects to follow suit, seeking a ‘domino effect’ in urban regeneration. This trend continued²⁹ for around 15 years until the UK’s Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government decided upon a gradual withdrawal of public funding from culture in the name of ‘austerity.’³⁰

Nevertheless one of these regeneration projects of this period, The Hepworth

Urbanism, 43 (2), 166-73. Parallaxical Identities elicits the metaphysical dimension between the presentation of ego-ideal, ideal-ego, and superego of architectural interventions seen as regenerative for culture, the city and its communities, and its cognitive properties.

²⁶ Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, 226.

²⁷ Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays*, 107.

²⁸ Susan MacLeod et. al., *Museum Revolutions*, (London, Routledge, 2007).

²⁹ Examples include Salford's The Lowry, 2000; Gateshead's Baltic, 2002; Middlesbrough's MIMA, 2007; and Margate's *The Turner Contemporary*, 2011.

³⁰ Claire Bishop, *Radical Museology*, (London, Koenig Books, 2014) 9.

Wakefield, designed by David Chipperfield in 2011, and completed in 2012, presents what Groom describes as a “last hurrah of a 15-year spate of new regional museums and galleries.”³¹ Awarded the Art Fund Museum Award for 2017, the Hepworth Wakefield celebrates and exhibits works from both Barbara Hepworth (1903-75) and Henry Moore (1898-1986) as part of their core collection in addition to other exhibitions. The largest gallery to be purpose-built in the UK for 50 years²⁹ and costing £35million, the building was celebrated by architectural journals and critics, culminating in a 2012 Stirling Prize nomination.

However, the Hepworth Wakefield presents a dilemma. It manages to revitalise an interstitial ‘dead’ space of the city, yet manages to expose itself within an environmental barrier; alluding to the gallery’s priority and elitism. On approaching the building as a visitor, Wakefield’s centre presents an urban fabric bound in Industrial and Victorian enterprise (Figures 1 and 2). A variety of buildings connote regal grandeur, where points of view are raised upwards towards spires, towers and plinths. There is even a bronze cast of Queen Victoria looming on a corner (Figure 3); however, she is alone, detached, and a bygone reminder of the city’s assiduity. Further into the city, haphazard urban intervention has taken place in the most ‘British of styles’ where groundworks are a mix of brick, asphalt, and concrete, laid in geometries that intersect and finish without purpose. One what/who do you mean here? does migrate towards Wakefield’s impressive Cathedral; however the Western face is shrouded by a mass of concrete steps that impeach upon the town’s thoroughfare. The historic fabric of the city is at odds with its new architecture, and there is a relentlessness of place to Wakefield’s disharmony between past, present, and future. The city appears on the threshold of the spectacular, yet it is still shrouded by painful intervention.

Because of this reason, the Hepworth Wakefield lends itself as an example of architecture and context in opposition; beneficial to exploring para-architectural inquiry and exploiting Tschumi’s practical collisions over coinciding. In this manner, no prevailing identity is present, and form and function transparencies become opaque, forcing one to *understand* and *diagnose* the “collision-relationships” between built form and context. The dichotomy between the conscious new and the unconscious history

³¹ Brian Groom, “Arts bring hope as building spree ends,” *Financial Times*, 24 May.

provides a context primed for the photo-essay and prose to act as a conduit, articulating the plastic and objective domains of architecture within the field of psychoanalytic inquiry; where the subjective and unconscious vie continually. As a result, the methodology illuminates the cognitive dimensions between the unconscious of community and architectural intervention, proposing that access to the knowledge of an architectural work exposes the hidden implications within architectural design. It becomes an approach where a perceived unconscious dimension, can begin to reposition architectural ideologies of place, and perhaps speak, semantically, to users from all avenues, not just the audience the building will serve. Architectural works can therefore resist becoming a manipulative tool subscribed solely to the regressive superego clinic, which de-realizes the observer; instead it fosters a duality of place, where anxieties of place and context, are remediated, emancipating oppression and contentious regeneration schemes. The following section presents the captured images and developed prose in response to the methodology. Eight figures are presented with further captions expanding upon the images and text.

Photo-essay and Prose



Figure 1. Looking Up, Wakefield. Photograph by the author. An example of Wakefield's industrial heritage. A brick aesthetic, emblazoned in "Provision," a former merchants in the Cheapside area of the city dating back to the 1750s. The burgeoning of trade and industry fades.



Figure 2. Wakefield's Towers. Photograph by the author. The Old Crown Court rises high above street-level in rich Victorian stone. Through an observation of its meticulous detailing, it is isolated, and forgotten. It evokes discipline and power, but is castrated spatially.



Figure 3. Iron Queen Victoria. Photograph by the author. Opposite the Old Crown Court Victoria rises on a plinth of stone and remains solemn in iron. Her gaze is of pomp, superiority, and justice. However, she is away from the city centre, gazing to the past.



Figure 4. Cathedral Reflections in Retail. Photograph by the author. The reflected cathedral in the older high street demonstrates past illusions of integration. The façade of glass reflects its religious past as a fragment and footnote to Wakefield's hive of functions.

my sight lines dart from classical to post war solution
faces of stone and spires that rise
a regal onerous gaze
idealised ego, bombarded by the super
angled walls of concrete shine in hazes of heather, blue and grey
I move between pockets of time
that halts between shadowed glimpses of progress
moments present themselves
across furnished avenues that only faced dulled materials
in the presence of your company
distanced by redundant waters
pathways polluted by burns and sulphuric airs
the name is a false pretence

transparent attempt to join the fields ego;

Ideal.

too small a space and too traumatised an audience

cauterising yourself rejects the future

collaborate. Engage.

badges of illusion play chaos with your first-rate myth

garrisoned cultures in tapestried history

Figure 5. An unconscious musing upon Wakefield. Written in January 2018, the prose was developed in-situ and post-visit. Unconscious remnants of the visit were evoked following receipt of the photographs, whilst clues to the atmosphere remain prominent in the text.



Figure 6. City centre towers. Photograph by the author. Passing through the city's centre a series of high-rise blocks rise from the ground in abstract dimensions that seem like they belong to a kit. Their facades are a mix of yellow, beige, and brown, yet the patina present in the photograph demonstrates their unremitting homogeneity. They appear transparent to their context, but are solitary units. Interestingly, there are no balconies. Solitary induced.



Figure 7. The Hepworth Wakefield upon the River Calder. Photograph by the author. A robust and wistful aesthetic, combined with the river's solitude is drawn into a fierce battle between a weir that screams and pounds. The architecture seems ethereal and out of place; can I to visit? How do I visit? Is it for me?



Figure 8. Bastioned Culture. Photograph by the author. Where tones of heather gleam in sunlight, the skies of the North bring overcast greys that the concrete cannot hide. Solid properties of scale and reserve enclose, enlightening fears of this *Other*.

Discussing the Photo-essay and Prose

In employing the photo-essay and intuitive-driven prose methodology upon visiting Hepworth Wakefield, one can conclude a number of conditions such as, a confluence of narratives taking place (as in Figures 4, 5, and 6), transference between architect and building, socio-political explicit construction such an institution (Figure 7), and incommensurability between community and architecture (Figure 1, 2 and 8, or 'Garrisoned cultures in tapestried history' in Figure 5). Despite these conditions, Wakefield's context is rife with conscious clues of an architectural quality. However it also displays that of a language, which does not create Foster's³² paragon of the creation of extravagant spaces that work to overwhelm the subject. In an obverse observation to this however, is that of the Hepworth Wakefield's architectural quality, and how it unconsciously transmits the notion that Žizek describes as "...to function as a tool for questioning that [social] structure and revising it."³³ Where the overriding quality in architecture once served a timeframe of progress and endeavour, the dichotomy of the Hepworth Wakefield, suggests a new paradigm - one that openly shuns its immediate context. The intuitive-prose highlights this issue:

'My sight lines dart from classical to post war solution,
Faces of stone and spires that rise;
a regal onerous gaze.'³⁴

This is a city in a state of flux, but that flux exists in a state of purgatory. The ego-ideal state is exposed in its pursuit of the big *Other's* agency. It becomes Wakefield's symbolic identification from which its residents observe themselves, and are judged. Therefore, a collective superego takes precedent, pressuring and projecting a feeling of unconscious guilt onto the city's residents. In many ways, Hepworth Wakefield's setting for analysis in the shadow of the 'iconic' architecture becomes a secondary issue to the narrative disconnection between institution and the wider city. This setting becomes a spatial construction and a temporal process;³⁵ a process where the behaviours expressed by Wakefield's core exorcising of nostalgic trauma. Note the

³² Hal Foster, "The ABCs of Contemporary Design," *October*, Vol. 100, Obsolescence (Spring, 2002), 191-199.

³³ Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 274.

³⁴ Louis D'Arcy-Reed, *An unconscious musing upon Wakefield*, see Figure 5, written January 2018, Wakefield, United Kingdom.

³⁵ Rendell, *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, 119.

‘garrisoned’ nature of the architecture styles present in the figures in this essay. It is as if the architecture personifies Donald Winnicott’s transitional object phenomena, where it shows the difference between a situation where the individual is able to move from a condition of isolation to ‘discover’ the environment and one where the environment ‘impinges’ on the individual, producing a reactive response and the individual’s return to isolation.³⁶ The photo-essay mirrors the narrative failing, resulting in the return to isolation in the concrete walls of the gallery (Figure 8), exemplified by the prose, ‘cauterising yourself rejects the future.’

It is hypothesized that upon review of the photo-essay and prose, one can begin to define the nature of architecture as not just a commodity that aspires to generate competency, regeneration, and new identities of place, but as a provocation to improve and involve dialogue between architecture, culture, cities, and communities. For instance, the following passage of prose highlights architecture as a practice that must learn that the practice of delivering new architecture within an urban fabric (particularly a civic function) is not a given paradigm for place. The role of architecture extends into the public domain physically and psychologically to define an environment to interact or consume on its own terms.

Idealised ego, bombarded by the super.
Angled walls of concrete shine in hazes of heather, blue and grey,
I move between pockets of time,
that halts between shadowed glimpses of progress.
Moments present themselves,
across furnished avenues that only faced dulled materials.
In the presence of your company,
distanced by redundant waters.³⁷

The domain of the real is subject to so many external factors that architects now and in future generations must be aware of, and seek to re-interpret, the para-architecturally. Not only will such a measure veer the conventions of architectural practice away from

³⁶ Cited in *Ibid.*, 69.

³⁷ D’Arcy-Reed, *An unconscious musing upon Wakefield*, see Figure 5.

the virtual and plastic domain, but the notion of conducting in-situ assessment of cognitive environments re-establishes architecture as a socially-ingrained-for-humanity practice, qualified to diagnose and treat urban fabrics sensitively and holistically.

It is perhaps a wider, and concluding, suggestion that the role of architectural pedagogy shifts (from my experience in British schools) its preoccupation with the aforementioned plastic concerns of drawing conventions, dependence on virtual platforms, planning applications, environmental, or engineering capabilities, and become faculties concerned with the social and metaphysical role of architecture in the humanities. To some extent this happens within Part II of RIBA accredited pathways, however it is not enough. Noted here is the ongoing conversation within architecture schools of student's mental health issues, cost of education, representation, and gender equality. The opportunity to work in a method that operates across different plateaus, with different voices, will only seek to effectively represent the society we truly live in; and perhaps, most importantly at the time of writing, resist the rhetoric proclaimed by mechanisms of power.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Today's cosmopolitan city is a myriad of messages, advertisements, cultures, and adverse inferences upon the psyche. As a result, the historic transgression of place, and therefore, the historic and evolving narrativity of place, the question raised by Gülsüm Baydar of whether architecture can function independently of homogenizing cultural identifications.³⁸ Where the irrationality of the built environment is therefore dictated by neoliberal directives to construct the city's new narratives, the photo-essay unpacks the construction, or rather, "disturbances" in the narrativity of place. Where narrativity becomes sometimes trivialised, it remains intrinsic to unconscious identities within urban fabrics. Tricia Austin once commented that, "a successful narrative environment will prompt embodied perception, physical action and intellectual change or transformation..."³⁹ For the Hepworth Wakefield and its surrounding fabric, the photo-

³⁸ Gülsüm Baydar, "The Cultural Burden of Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 57,4, (2004), 19-27.

³⁹ Tricia Austin, "Scales of Narrativity," in *Museum Making*, MacLeod, S., Hourston Hanks, L., and Hale, J. (London: Routledge, 2012), 107-118.

essay highlights that the existence of a successful narrative is obfuscated from unconscious interpretation. The city firmly exists in a state of flux; it is also restricted from progressing too far. As a result, Hepworth Wakefield becomes the marker for collective superego to take precedence, affording the Žižekian presence of “projecting a feeling of unconscious guilt.”⁴⁰ The disconnect between place and the scale of history and present are subject to phantasies of desire, and fail to connect place.

The Hepworth Wakefield can never become the transitional object for the city that the architecture demands. It remains locked in inadequacy and its metaphorical ideal of what Wakefield does not want. The psychoanalytic methods highlights the age-old architectural problem, “what is the unconscious wish behind this architecture?”⁴¹ In facing a context such as Wakefield, where the spectre of nostalgic loss and suspicion has not been presented with a cathartic opportunity to cleanse their unconscious, the Hepworth Wakefield and its symbolic identification with its namesake, only serves as a socio-political token to bring the city in line with its superego state of flux. The disconnection fails to address Wakefield’s unconscious core at the heart of the city, and within its community. Its architectural delivery does not do enough to drive intensities of engagement,⁴² instead the antagonisms of place for Wakefield is within its extremes of place across scales of time and disconnection. Unfortunately, for the *Hepworth Wakefield*, it reproduces these antagonisms.⁴³

In conducting para-architectural methods across the subjective and objective dimensions, it is hoped that the potential in adopting exercises, such as photo-essays or prose, allow for the conducting of subjective inquiries upon place and practice as a response-mechanism that fosters a sense of totality in relation to architecture, the city and social concerns. There is a strength in embracing complexities within architecture, and embodying reflexive practices, as a mode to expose new perspectives to remediate one’s unconscious position to architecture’s objective quality of the real. Interrelations between Tschumi’s para-architectural methods and Rendell’s positions as a site-writer,

⁴⁰ Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 274.

⁴¹ Martin, “Psychoanalytic Diagnosis in Architecture and Urban Design,” 8.

⁴² Bruno Latour, and Alben Yaneva, “Give Me A Gun And I Will Make All The Buildings Move - An Ant's View Of Architecture,” in *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research*, (Basel, Birkhäuser, 2008), 80-89.

⁴³ Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, 274.

appears radical in its methodology, as it diametrically opposes the limitations of architectural thought - that of limiting and constraining dimensions to pursue an ideology. The idea of the 'radical' (radical in adopting para-architectural methods in design) architect or designer in theoretical progressiveness no longer exists; instead, the radical remains in the domain of the arts, commodified and fetishised (hence Heatherwick's reputation for radical designs, which ultimately are neoliberal commodifications of architectural design). It is proposed that radicality within architecture becomes integral to design methodologies. This essay demonstrates that objective and subjective dimensions of reality construct alternative perspectives between the confluence of architecture, culture, institutions, community and identity. Architecture as a discipline necessitates para-architectural and psychoanalytic methodologies of practice, as a mode to reveal what is behind the curtain, blurring the distinction between the objective, and our own subjectivity.

References

- Austin, Tricia. 2012. "Scales of Narrativity," In *Museum Making*, MacLeod, Suzanne, Hourston Hanks, Laura, and Hale, Jonathan. London: Routledge, 107-118.
- Baydar, Gülsüm. 2004. "The Cultural Burden of Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education*, 57,4, 19-27.
- Beatty, Christina. et. al. 2007. "Twenty years on: has the economy of the UK coalfields recovered," *Economy and Space*, 39: 1654-1675.
- Bishop, Claire. 2014. *Radical Museology*, London, Koenig Books.
- D'Arcy-Reed, Louis. 2019. "Observing Parallaxical Identities of Place in Architecture – Adopting Architectural and Psychoanalytical Approaches to Urban Fabrics," *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism*, 43 (2), 166-73. <https://doi.org/10.3846/jau.2019.9296>.
- Foster, Hal. 2002. "The ABCs of Contemporary Design," *October*, Vol. 100, Obsolescence (Spring, 2002), 191-199.
- Groom, Brian. 2011. "Arts bring hope as building spree ends," *Financial Times*, 24 May 2011, Arts Section, 12.
- Kolson Hurley, Amanda. 2017. "This Is Your Brain on Architecture." *CityLab*. New York: CityLab. Available at: <https://www.citylab.com/design/2017/07/this-is-your-brain-on-architecture/531810/>, Accessed 10th March 2017.

- Latour, Bruno, and Yaneva, Albena. 2008. "Give Me A Gun And I Will Make All The Buildings Move - An Ant's View Of Architecture," In *Explorations in Architecture: Teaching, Design, Research*, Basel, Birkhäuser, 80-89.
- Lippard, L. R. (2008). "Out of the past: Lucy R. Lippard talks about Eva Hesse with Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson." *Artforum International*, 6, 236.
- MacLeod, Susan et. al. 2007. *Museum Revolutions*, London, Routledge.
- Martin, Timothy. 2016. "Psychoanalytic Diagnosis in Architecture and Urban Design," In *Architecture and the Unconscious*, Hendrix, John and Holm, Lorens. London: Ashgate Press.
- Menninghaus, Winfried. 2009. "On the 'Vital Significance' of Kitsch: Walter Benjamin's Politics of 'Bad Taste'" In *Walter Benjamin and the architecture of modernity*. Benjamin, Andrew, and Rice, Charles. Melbourne: Re. Press.
- Netto, Vinicius M. 2017. *The Social Fabric of Cities*, London, Routledge.
- Rendell, Jane. 2006. *Art and Architecture*, London: IB Taurus and Co.
- Rendell, Jane. 2017. *The Architecture of Psychoanalysis*, London: IB Taurus and Co.
- Tschumi, Bernard. 1996. *Architecture and Disjunction*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.
- Vidler, Anthony. 1999. *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.
- Villanueva, Joaquin. 2017. "Rights," In *Urban Theory: New Critical Perspectives*, Jayne, Mark, and Ward, Kevin. London, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Walker, Enrique, and Bernard Tschumi, Bernard. 2006. *Tschumi on Architecture: Conversations with Enrique Walker*. New York, N.Y., Monacelli Press.
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2005. *Interrogating the Real*, New York: Bloomsbury.
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2006. *How to read Lacan*, London: Granta Publications.
- Žižek, Slavoj. 2011. *Living in the End Times*, London, Verso Books.