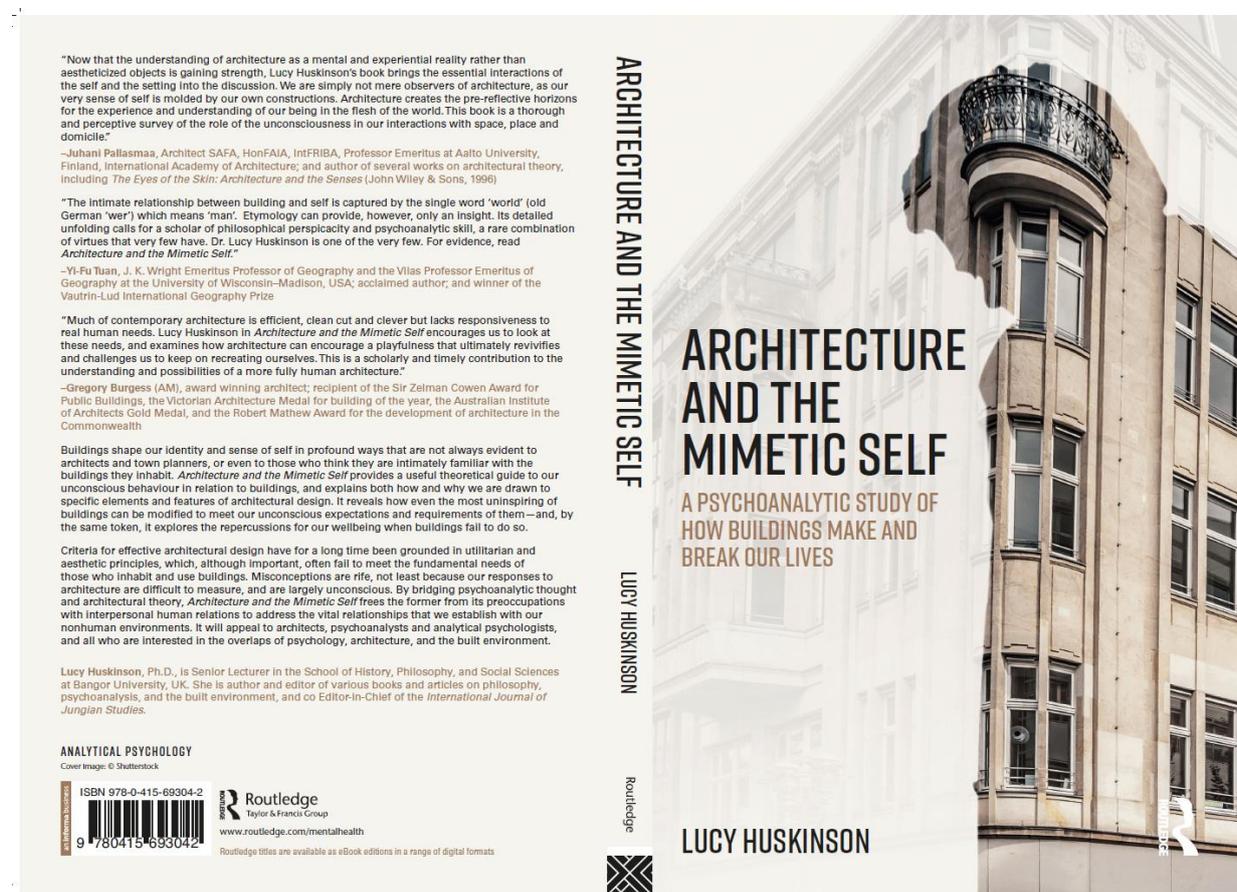


The built environment and the unconscious in Freud, Jung, and Hillman.

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The relationship between the built environment and the unconscious is a subject I have been researching for several years. I recently published a book on the subject called *Architecture and the Mimetic Self*. Some of the ideas in this talk are explored in much more detail there.



Outline of the talk

First, I will introduce the various ways the idea of the built environment has been treated and employed in psychoanalytic theory generally, and specifically by Freud and Jung in their understandings of the unconscious, I will consider briefly their metaphors of 'house of

psyche', Freud's idea of the uncanny, with cities that evoke the return of the repressed, and Jung's architectural dreams and the physical, material buildings he designed and had constructed as catalysts for unconscious transformation.

I then go on to discuss Hillman's criticism of this tradition, focussing first on his criticism of Jung's tower at Bollingen and then of modern buildings and cities more generally. I will outline how the built environment for Hillman is unlikely to evoke the kinds of unconscious experiences that Freud and Jung suggest.

The second part of the paper will question how we can engage with the unconscious more effectively in our built environments, and I will present some viable solutions given by Hillman, with three examples of how similar ideas have been put into practice by other people, past and present.

I would be keen to learn of some of your own experiences of the unconscious in its relationship to the buildings and cities you inhabit.

The built environment in psychoanalytic literature

The built environment is rarely discussed in theories and writings by psychoanalysts. Traditionally, psychoanalysts have focussed their attention on the relationships between people; they haven't concerned themselves with the material fabric of buildings or of urban spaces. Why is that?

In the 1960s, the psychoanalyst Harold Searles pondered this very question, and he came to the conclusion that psychoanalysts just haven't had the time to consider the importance of the built environment or other nonhuman objects because interpersonal relations between people have been "so complex" and of more "pressing importance" to work with. But he says the failure to consider the impact that buildings and cities have on our behaviour can only lead to ridiculous conclusions – as though we live our lives, he says, "in a vacuum" and against "a background devoid of form, colour, and substance".

In the 1980s, the Jungian psychologist, Joseph Redfearn suggested that the disregard depth psychologists have for the nonhuman or built environment indicates a deep resistance in their work. He says that they like to pretend the built environment doesn't affect people in

fundamental ways because it means they don't have to accept the primordial idea that buildings and other nonhuman objects are somehow animated and 'alive'; that they have 'soul'.

Redfearn points out that this idea, of "primitive animism", as he calls it, is not, as the vast majority of psychoanalysts like to believe, "the name of a peculiar religion that Stone Age people follow", but, "a basic truth about ourselves and the real world which we all need to re-learn".

A decade later, in the 1990s, James Hillman—through his notion of 'anima mundi'—calls upon us to embrace "soul" in all things, in, he says, "things of nature and man-made things of the street". "Our soul life takes place", he says, "on highways in traffic, in houses [...] in malls and airports, [and] in open offices".

Thus, in ideas of Harold Searles, James Redfearn and James Hillman, we find psychotherapy or psychoanalysis is not something that happens solely between people, but between people and their nonhuman environments. And this means the built environment has an important impact on our behaviour and sense of self, and, furthermore, that buildings enable us to engage with aspects of our unconscious lives.

So where does Freud and Jung fit into this?

It is well known that Jung wrote about the anima-mundi before Hillman and that he lamented the loss of our natural connection to the soul of the world, which was caused, he claims, by our desire in the last two centuries—since the time of Descartes—to isolate our mind from the cosmos and regard it as a self-enclosed system. And both Jung and Freud recognise that the built environment has a significant affective impact on our behaviour and that it is a site inhabited by the unconscious, a veritable dwelling place for unconscious motivation.

I will now briefly outline some examples of this in their writings, starting with their well-known architectural metaphors of house of psyche—where an image of a building or city is presented as the psyche with its fundamental structures and dynamic affects. I will then criticise Freud’s metaphor from a Jungian perspective, before outlining Hillman’s criticism of Jung’s. Each is criticised in turn for failing to demonstrate the full potential of the building as a place that enables fruitful engagement with the unconscious.

The metaphors of house of psyche employed by Freud and Jung describe the psyche as if it were a building of several stories, each of which correspond to a different part of the psyche. While the rooms above ground level (which are most frequently used and inhabited) represent the dwelling of ego-consciousness, the darker rooms below ground level that are rarely used (other than to store forgotten possessions) represent the dwelling place of the unconscious. Although well-known, these metaphors are often misunderstood as mere abstract diagrams that simply represent the structure of the psyche, indicating its interconnected parts. But they convey more than this. They also convey the phenomenological nature of the built environment—the feelings and affects that buildings have, and the way buildings can impact on us, consciously and unconsciously.

These metaphors of Freud and Jung are part of a long historical tradition of architectural metaphors that seek to convey the various ways we interact with the material world around us, including our unconscious relationships with buildings, and they can lead us to consider various ways in which the built environment can enable us to engage with our unconscious selves more effectively, transforming our personality in the process.

The fundamental relationship between the built environment and psyche or sense of self has infiltrated the English language with common phrases adopted to explain how a person is feeling. For example, in English we often speak of the ‘corridors of the mind’, we equate ‘a tidy house’ with ‘a tidy mind’, eyes are ‘windows to the soul’, we talk about ‘feeling’ ‘at home with oneself’, and so on. Jung mentions, “When someone is not quite right in the head, we say in German that he [...] ‘has cobwebs in the attic’”. And, perhaps there are similar sayings in Portuguese. Perhaps you could let me know at the end of the talk.

The idea that images of buildings can be employed to integrate ourselves more effectively is an ancient idea. For instance, in ancient Rome, when a rhetorician or orator needed to give a long speech that required them to remember many ideas in their correct sequence, they would often employ a method known as the 'Art of Memory'.

This method involved the person imagining themselves taking a walk around a building or city street. Inside each room or urban space, they imagined themselves placing a specific idea that they needed to recall in their speech. Later, when they wanted to recall the ideas in a specific sequence, they retraced their imaginary steps around the building or street, encountering each idea they placed there along their imaginary walk. These buildings were known as 'memory palaces' and they helped a person to integrate their pre-conscious ideas with their conscious mindset, as one would say in psychoanalytic or Jungian terms.

Let's return to the 'houses of psyche' described by Freud and Jung as metaphors of the affective nature of the unconscious.

Jung elaborates on his metaphor in his 1934 essay, 'Review of Complex Theory' where he describes the felt-affects of the complex as an intruder who breaks into a house through the basement rooms, causing great disruption to the residents. His idea is that the ego experiences the complex as a sudden and unexpected intruder that violates the safety and self-containment of its familiar space. The intrusion originates in the unconscious part of the psyche.

Incidentally, the philosopher Gaston Bachelard in his famous book *The Poetics of Space* from 1957, talks about this example from Jung's writing but as he does so he accidentally mixes up the rooms in his discussion and places the intruder in the attic rooms of the house. Consequently, the error leads to the mistaken conclusion that the complex originates in the realm of consciousness and not the unconscious.

Freud employed his metaphor of house as psyche to explain the relationship between dreams of buildings and the psychosomatic symptoms that appeared in his hysterical patients. He concluded that dreams which are stimulated by symptoms in the teeth, for instance, will conjure up images of large entrance-halls with high, vaulted roofs, for these large, contained spaces, he said, correspond to the oral cavity. By the same token, if his patient dreamt of muddy streets, they will have a problem that is stimulated by their

intestines. And, given Freud's association of the unconscious with repressed sexual instincts, it is unsurprising that he often relates architectural imagery to representations of male and female genitalia. Thus, he says, "narrow spaces", "steep passages", "locked and opened doors", "cupboards", "hollow objects", and "vessels of all kinds", are all psychosomatically linked, he says, to the vagina or uterus; while "steps", "ladders", and 'staircases', are,

unquestionably, symbols of copulation [for] we come to the top of them in a series of rhythmical movements and with increasing breathlessness and then, with a few rapid leaps, we can get to the bottom again. Thus the rhythmical pattern of copulation is reproduced in going upstairs.

"Smooth walls over which [one] climbs and, the facades of houses", he says, correspond to "erect human bodies", and "window-sills" and "balconies" on houses are projected "female breasts". And on he goes! But, the basic conclusion I want to draw from this is that for Freud and for Jung, architectural images are used to explain the affective presence of unconscious impulses, and furthermore, their architectural metaphors describe the whole psyche, which is to say, they include the unconscious as much as they do the familiar ego. Thus, a healthy psyche involves all rooms and spaces of the building together and interconnected: connected for example by stairs, doors, or corridors. There will be rooms more frequently inhabited by ego – such as rooms we call in English the 'living room' or 'lounge', or 'sitting room' to denote our more 'conscious' activities that required conscious, focussed attention within them. And there are some inhabited by the unconscious, such as the dark and dusty rooms that are rarely frequented and neglected. There are also the liminal places that denote the presence of both—such as the bedroom where we drift off to unconscious sleep or where get up to the kinds of Dionysian activities we want to keep hidden from the conscious gaze of people who pass on the communal streets outside.

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that horror films or dark 'psychological' films make use of this idea—this archetypal trope—with common depictions of haunted houses or houses within which inhabitants are threatened or preyed upon by an unknown villain, ghost, or monster, which more often than not lurks in a dark basement room, under the floor boards, or in neglected and unused attic rooms. *The Babadook* is one of my favourite films of this kind. The nature of the 'monster' in this film is ambiguous. The source of disturbance and pressing danger is either a literal ghoul who lives in the basement rooms or it is a complex of

felt affects—an embodiment of grief and depression associated with the possessions of the dead father that are kept in the basement rooms. Another good example is Hitchcock's film *Psycho*, which features a serial killer who keeps his mother's dead body in her bedroom in the upper storey of the house. Her son is in denial over her death, which is why she remains in this liminal dwelling place. Instead he takes on her persona, pretending to be her as he sets about killing unsuspecting residents who have booked into his motel: a single-storey building nearby.

While Freud employed his architectural metaphors to emphasise the negative aspects of the unconscious as symptoms of unresolved conflict—or the 'return of the repressed', as he refers to it—Jung utilises architectural imagery to emphasise the more positive, prospective impact of the unconscious as it enriches the ego's orientation.

Freud discusses the ego's uncanny experiences of the unconscious in his essay from 1919, 'The Uncanny'. The uncanny, from the German term *das Unheimliche*, translates into English as 'unhomely': of not being at home within one's place of dwelling or within oneself. The uncanny is an experience of something that is familiar and unfamiliar at one and the same time. Freud explains this experience using examples, often personal anecdotes, of the way we interact with the built environment. He describes an occasion when he found himself lost and bewildered in the deserted streets of an Italian town. Although he encountered familiar landmarks as he walked around, he kept returning to them, as if walking round and round in a circle, and unable to get his proper bearings on the place. Another example he gives is of wandering about a dark and unfamiliar room, searching for the light switch, but colliding time after time with the same piece of furniture. These kinds of experiences convey how we are not in complete control of our environments, and how they seem, rather, to control us.

Freud's emphasis on the more negative connotations of the relationship between self and the built environment overlaps with a tradition in the nineteenth century that diagnoses the city as a place of neurotic disorders and mental illness, while at the same time idealising rural environments as places of health and healing. The popular diagnoses of agoraphobia and claustrophobia, for example, can be traced historically to the sudden and massive increase in urban developments in industrial Europe that saw cities emerge and grow at an alarming and unprecedented rate, eating into the rural landscape. This led to immense

feelings of bewilderment in rural and urban communities. Agoraphobia and claustrophobia were new and popular diagnoses at the time. Agoraphobia—meaning, fear of the city, is an anxiety of open spaces and of large buildings that dwarf the individual, swallowing them up into the fabric of the city, and it is a phobia that Freud was known to have suffered at very times in his life—due, perhaps to the massive ornate buildings that were under construction in Vienna, when he lived there, along the famous *Ringstrasse*: a wide and expansive tree-lined boulevard near Freud's apartment, and along which he would take his hourly walk each day. We know there were occasions when Freud would start to shake and become overwhelmed with anxiety when having to cross large, busy streets.

In contrast to Freud, buildings and urban environments for Jung, often represented the excitement of new theoretical discoveries about the unconscious, and rather than psychological *disorders*, they led, he thought, to *enrichments* of his personality. Jung's understanding of the unconscious is arguably more forward looking than Freud's—so, rather than pointing to an unresolved conflict—of a past experience that the ego wants to defend against—Jung's understanding of the collective unconscious presents a person with experiences that are wholly new and beyond their individual making. The difference between the two is indicated by the additional storey or floor that Jung gives to his house of psyche. This additional storey is placed deep underground, as lower basement rooms, which open the house to the primary secrets of the ground upon which the whole house sits—to its archetypal foundations.

Jung draws on a variety of architectural images in his theoretical writings and within his personal reflections on his own psychological development. They often appear to him at the point of a discovery about himself or the workings of the psyche more generally. For instance, he dreams of dark and dirty city streets of a place he calls Liverpool. These streets are organised in a circular arrangement around a lotus tree, planted in a city square at the centre of the city. While Freud may have been interested in the associations of the dirty streets to the condition of Jung's intestines (!), Jung's dream city reminds me of a mandala that he drew of a castle in his *Red Book*. This castle includes walls and avenues similar to the city streets of his dream, which lead, as his streets do, to a central point. And this mandala, in turn, reminds me of the medieval fort in Pamanova in North-East Italy. When seen from above, the fort reveals similar star-shaped fortifications and a patchwork of fields around it.

My Phd student, Martin Gledhill, however, convincingly suggests that Jung's mandala was in all probability influenced by a defensive fort, of similar design, that used to exist in Klein-Hünningen, close to where Jung lived in Basel.

Jung tells us that his dream of the city of Liverpool led him to the realisation of the archetypal Self at the centre of the personality. And he would come to have many other powerful and impressionable dreams of imaginary buildings—such as a new wing or annexe to his house that he would explore, or a new library room that he wasn't aware of before—and these dream-buildings would excite him because he thought they indicated the presence of previously unconscious aspects of his wider personality.

And, of course, Jung took on the role of architect in the design and construction of his house in Küsnacht, and his house—or 'tower' as Jung calls it—in Bollingen. Together they are often interpreted as concrete representations of Jung's ego-oriented life and his unconscious life respectively. For Küsnacht is where Jung would entertain guests, raise his family, and consult with his clients or patients. And his house in Bollingen is where he would go to be alone with himself, and to engage with his unconscious reveries through meditation and active imaginations. We could say, therefore, that together these two houses express in concrete form, the two parts of Jung's house of psyche. And Jung consolidates the psychological link between the psyche and the built environment by dedicating an entire chapter to his Bollingen building in his pseudo-autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1961). There he describes how his engagement with the building—through its design and construction—led him to discover his self. The building, he says, is nothing short of his whole self in stone.

There is a crucial critic, however, who disagrees with Jung's conclusions, and who thinks the Bollingen tower is—contrary to Jung's claim that it is the whole self in stone—nothing other than a dangerous place of mere ego—of the neurotic ego in stone, of an ego that seeks self-isolation, apart from and out of touch with, the world that becomes positioned *outside* it. This critic is James Hillman.

I come now to the second part of my paper on the perceived *problem* with the built environment today—which is to say, that it speaks more of the needs, desires, and ideals of the neurotic ego than a healthy and genuine engagement with the unconscious

The built environment and neurotic egos.

When I visited Hillman's archives in Santa Barbara a few years ago I discovered a series of handwritten notes by Hillman from 1993 that criticise Jung's tower. He says this building is a "monument in stone to the self-enclosed ego" that imprisons Jung within its walls. "We are really in a strange place inside [Jung's] tower". It reveals Jung has a "self-enclosed stone-walled personality".

Interestingly, Andreas Jung—a grandson of Jung and an architect by profession—describes how Jung expressed in his life a very strong desire for safety and security, and that this was expressed, not so much in his Bollingen house, but his house in Küsnacht, which Andreas describes as a defensive fortress with its small barred windows and heavy locked doors.

Hillman's criticism of Jung's tower as an expression of the neurotic ego can be read as an expression of his criticism of modern buildings and the built environment more generally.

According to Hillman, Jung's tower is a problematic structure that magnifies Jung's ego-need for stability by seeking to enclose him in an impenetrable defensive structure that isolates him from life outside. And this is a problem that Hillman associates with modern architecture generally, especially the high-rise blocks and skyscrapers of New York City and Chicago: all of which express, he says, a "walled off individualism, the disease of [...] the twentieth century". "Instead of *connecting*, they are now *excluding*".

For Hillman, buildings generally—and towers especially—create in their inhabitants the feelings of 'disdain' for the world. In an undated and unpublished note, Hillman equates "paranoia" with the perception one has at the top of a tall building: of, he says, "looking far out" from it, "looking down from it", "looking up to it"—in other words, bewildering vistas of great distance that accentuate our separation from the world rather our participation within it.

In another unpublished note Hillman describes buildings as places of “control”, and towers as “heroic” structures of ego that place you, he says “at the top, above everyone” else. We may think we are heroic when we construct ever-taller buildings, but in doing so we are constructing, he says, edifices that are unrelatable to our human proportions and sense of self. And the glass surfaces with which we clad are modern buildings, he says, shine too brightly and dazzle us rather than invite our engagement. They simply reflect back to us what we already see in ourselves.

The problem with the built environment today.

Far from the analogies of house as psyche where buildings were thought by Freud and Jung to represent and express the whole psyche, Hillman regards modern buildings as too often one-sided expressions of ego alone. Not all buildings fail to house the ‘soul’, he says, but most do because they fail, he says, to evoke an aesthetic response in us. For Hillman, an aesthetic response is very different to the way our ego responds to things. We experience things aesthetically, he says, with our bodies, as a “gasp” or “shiver”, as something that “takes your breath away and makes the hair on your neck rise”. Buildings today are problematic when they fail to have this kind of effect on us—they appeal instead to naïve ideals and appearance that attract the ego, to buildings that are large and shiny, “pleasing, mindless”, “sweet, sentimental, and old fashioned”, and to those that appeal to ideals, he says, of “prettiness” and “simplicity”, efficiency and functionality.

Our technological age has suppressed our aesthetic sensibilities and because of this we tend to value things from the disposition of our egos: we prefer things to be certain, functional, economical, ordered and systemistised. And, consequently, we tend to make and design things that reflect these superficial ideals. Our buildings and cities consequently become sterile and fail to evoke our unconscious imaginations.

Cities are beginning to look very similar (for instance, it is common now to find a McDonalds and Starbucks on every downtown street). And street plans in new towns are often designed to help residents get from A to B in the quickest time possible and are often designed around the need to control traffic flow. The built environment has become

rationalised, and this can have repercussions for our mental health, leading to feelings of isolation and alienation from within ourselves—cutting us off from imagination and bodily experiences—and from each other and our wider environments.

Even playgrounds for children—those places that are intended to inspire imaginative and creative play— have become overly-rationalised with designated play spaces set apart from streets, with play equipment that has to be used in specific ways otherwise they don't function properly. 'Slides' have to be slid down, 'sea-saws' must go up and down, 'swings' can only go back and forth, and 'round-about' must move in a circular motion.

The solution to the problem.

As Hillman intimates, the vicious cycle of designing things with only a limited, overtly rationalised approach and living with their sterile effects is a cycle we need to break, as we cannot continue to live this way if we want to live healthily. But what can we do to overcome this problem?

Hillman says we need to be more receptive to surprises and the unique characteristics of things—even those buildings that seem wholly uninspiring and unsurprising and that seem to look like any other in any given street town or city. To that end, it is important, he says, to allow ourselves to be more receptive to things to contrast with this—with things that seem disturbing and shocking or ugly to look at. Rather than immediately dismiss them or turn away from them, we should try, he says, to embrace them. For when we find something disturbing our unconscious is stirred from its slumber, and this, Hillman says, sets in motion our engagement with the unique characteristics of that thing—its "soul" as he calls it.

Hillman calls the recognition of something as ugly or disturbing as a "pathologized" perception. This perception, he says, unsettles us and dislodges our ego from the comforts of its rationalised outlook. It then forces us to engage with things in a more unconscious manner. It prevents us from seeing things as we expect them to be, and instead allows us to engage with things in a surprising way. In so doing, we start to notice the unique character of the thing and experience it as if for the first time.

We often fail to notice a building that is designed to satisfy the ego's needs—these buildings are conventional and seem banal because they appear just as we expect them to be. But an 'ugly' building, for instance, engages us more deeply and bypasses our more measured 'ego' responses to the environment.

Hillman laments how our desensitized culture is unable to harness the creative possibilities of ugliness because it has a poor understanding of its psychological value. We usually simply dismiss things that are ugly and turn our backs on them. But, thankfully, he says, many people living within depersonalised buildings and cities—perhaps without even realising—set about trying to “pathologize” these places, by unleashing an unconscious assault on them to make them ugly, and subsequently to make them noticeable.

Graffiti is a great example of the kind of assault Hillman has in mind. Often regarded as a punishable crime or 'ugly nuisance', Hillman reinterprets graffiti as an attempt to restore soul into our problematic architecture. “Notice”, he says,

what happens to our blank bank walls and office buildings, the merely functional fortresses [... with] their cost-effective, low maintenance, impersonal facelessness. They become refaced—though we say defaced—with graffiti, signatures, monograms, declarations of love, territorial markings, [and...] daring, inventiveness.

Graffiti then is no longer considered a social problem, but a social solution! It is regarded as much needed expression of the unconscious, required to re-sensitize our sterile, ego-centric buildings.

I would like to pause my discussion here with an amusing diversion. I recently came across the work of an artist (Mathieu Tremblin¹) who redraws graffiti tags on buildings to make them legible. In other words, in psychoanalytic terms, he is returning these expressions of the unconscious back into the rationalized order of their environment. The results reveal just how ridiculous graffiti appears when it is reduced to the rational terms of the ego!

¹ <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2016/07/street-artist-paints-over-ugly-graffiti-to-make-it-legible>

Hillman's ideas help us to appreciate that even the most banal and uninspiring features of the built environment—those we barely notice that have been designed with only function and economic efficiency in mind—can have “soul”. But it is up to us to notice this soul, and to engage with it. And this is not easy to do, especially when there is nothing particularly “ugly” or “disconcerting” about the buildings we have become overly familiar with, such as the buildings we walk past or inhabit every day. We can help ourselves, Hillman claims, by “slowing down” as we go about our daily business, and stopping—not to look around us, he says, but, to *really look* around us, to *notice* what is there, to notice the details.

He calls this approach ‘notitia’, which means “come to know”, which is to say, we can approach our environments from a perspective of not yet knowing or presuming to know what is there. This allows us to become more susceptible to the unique character of things.

By slowing down and noticing the buildings around us, we become aware of the textures on a wall, the way the shadows collect in a corner, the lines in the grain of wood, the cracks in plaster, or the shapes of the rubbish piled in the street, and so on. And we will come to notice not only the visual character of things, but their unique sounds and smells, and the feel of their touch. The built environment will become re-faced, re-sensitized.

For the remainder of this paper, I wish to present just three examples of ways people—past and present—have employed this kind of approach in their engagement with the built environment. These are examples, therefore, of the intimate relationship between buildings and self: a relationship of mutual transformation and awakening, where—we could say, in Hillman's use of the term, the ‘soul’ of the building and the person is brought to life. Where, the anima mundi—the soul of the world—is awakened.

I am keen to hear of others you have come across, or perhaps ways in which you practice ‘notitia’ in your own lives.

First, we travel back to 1790, when a French writer and soldier called Xavier de Maistre was put under house-arrest as the result of a duel he fought. Xavier is confined to the house and cannot leave it. (Similar perhaps to the enforced ‘lockdown’ many of us have experienced in recent times due to the Covid-19 virus!) Xavier begins to suffer from immense boredom in his quarantine and decides to take advantage of his confinement by imagining he is going on

a voyage. He subsequently contemplates the details of his rectangular bedroom very carefully as well as the various things housed in it. And he starts to find them at once strange and unfamiliar –or as Freud might say, ‘uncanny’. His contemplation takes the form of a meditative journey, where he visits parts of the room as if they were distant, uncharted places. The all-too-familiar places in his bedroom are no longer boring but are places of evocative fantasy, which lead him to imagine and reflect on a string of associated ideas, memories, and stories.

Here is a quote from his reflections published in his well-known book, *Voyage Around My Room (Voyage autour de ma chambre)* published in 1794:

I will even follow a zigzag path, and I will trace out every possible geometrical trajectory if need be. I don't like people who have their itineraries and idea so clearly sorted out [...] There's no more attractive pleasure, in my view, than following one's ideas wherever they lead [...] without even trying to keep to any set route. And so, when I travel through my room, I rarely follow a straight line: I go from my table towards a picture hanging in a corner; from there I set out obliquely towards the door; but even though, when I begin, it really is my intention to go there, if I happen to meet my armchair en- route, I don't think twice about it, and settle down in it without further ado.

Xavier's imaginary journey can be regarded as an early forerunner of a field of study called psychogeography, which was popularised in the 1950s by a French political critic called Guy Debord. Psychogeography is my second example.

Psychogeography involves a playful exploration of urban environments that encourages the pedestrian to wander away from their predictable pathways into a new awareness of the environment. It often involves something called “aimless walking” or “drifting”, where a person walks around a city as if they were a tourist, directed by whichever place or direction attracts them at any given moment – or, we might say, driven by unconscious motivations. By doing this, a personal street map can then be created to reveal the more emotional and evocative pathways in a city to rival the conventional street maps which designate walkways and prescribe one-ways systems to control the flow movement of pedestrians and drivers. Guy Debord sought to revolutionise modern approaches to architecture in this way.

And together with a Danish artist, Asger Jorn, he published the *Psychogeographic Guide to Paris* in 1957, and *The Naked City: a Psychogeographic Map of Paris* in 1958 which involved them cutting up a typical map of Paris and repositioning the pieces of the parts of Paris that were most “stimulating” , and then drawing red lines between these places to represent the pathways one can take to walk there or to drive by taxi (as taxi was thought to be a more independent way of travelling compared to the public bus).

The third and final example I shall give is the activity known as *parkour* or ‘*free running*’ as it is sometimes called.

‘Parkour’ is a word derived from the French term for a route or line and the verb to travel through, and it is an activity where a person leaps and vaults from objects in the built environment that would normally limit their movement. Objects such as walls, fences, curbs, railing, benches, street signs, and roofs are no longer obstacles in their path, and no longer dictate to the person their intended use or function. And thus, with *parkour* walls are walked up, handrails stood on, roofs become running tracks, steps are vaulted from, windows swung through and so on. Parkour is therefore a bodily movement that aims to be as fluid as possible, and it attempts to re-aestheticise architecture through a person’s unfamiliar bodily relationship with it. The imagination of the parkour runner reshapes the places, and spaces, of the built environment, and by doing so, it challenges the rational, conventional meaning that have been assigned to it.

All three examples show how architecture can be reawakened to release its soul and engage with its unconscious possibilities.