

Architecture as Projection: Empathy, Design Thinking, and the Exploration of Self

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Abstract. This paper examines architectural design as a psychoanalytic act of projection, situating the built environment as both an extension and expression of the designer's interior world. Drawing from Freud's dream theory, Jungian projection, Lacan's mirror stage, and Bachelard's phenomenology, the paper argues that design is shaped by unconscious residues, memories, and interpretations of space that manifest through iterative decision-making. Projection is explored not only as a mental mechanism but also as a spatial agent, integrating philosophical perspectives from Kant, Whitehead, and Foucault to position architectural form as inseparable from human perception and embodied experience. The paper further connects projection to contemporary design pedagogy through design thinking and the development of cognitive empathy, emphasizing how designers mediate personal biases with ethical responsibilities to others. Through historical examples—including Freud's own spatial sketches and the architectural practice of his son, Ernst Freud—the paper illustrates how personal memory and environmental influence shape both individual and communal understandings of space. Ultimately, the paper argues that architecture is inherently a double inscription: designers create for others, yet inevitably project aspects of themselves into their work. Recognizing this interdependence offers a framework for cultivating empathetic, ethically grounded design practices.

1 Introduction

Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud defined the term projection as the mental process by which people attribute to others what is in their own minds. While Freud's initial theory presented the concept as primarily an unconscious defense mechanism, his daughter Anna Freud expanded his ideas to classify projection as an action that requires realization of interior and exterior reality. Psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung expanded on Freud's theory to suggest that projection involves both our conscious and unconscious thoughts as we approach our contextual surroundings, and that it is our surroundings that trigger the action of projection, writing that "the object offers a hook to the projection, and even lures it out" [1]. Consequently, our environments are inherently juxtaposed against both our physicality and our mind, presenting a dichotomy through which architecture can become a form of psychoanalytical projection.

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Architecture and/or the built environment can be viewed as a holistic representation or reflection of the “self” of the designer, illustrating personal passions and/or ethical imperatives through 3-dimensional space. This is seen most clearly in the design of projects for the self (a dwelling, an installation, an art piece, etc.), but the boundary is most imprecise when purporting to design for others. Critically, the design of public spaces requires a mediation of personal projections with the universal needs of the public, an ever-evolving prospect, resulting in palimpsestic landscapes as projects and needs evolve across time.

2 Dream Theory: Projection & Mnemic Integration

Interpreting architecture through psychological or philosophical theories is a recurring phenomenon in architectural theory and education, typically related to phenomenology, the study of a conscious, lived experiences from a first-person perspective. Architecturally, phenomenology provides a framework for understanding how the external, physical space impacts internal feeling or behavior. However, to understand how projection of the individual might impact external design theory, it is critical to first examine how the individual processes formal stimuli internally. Freud’s *Dream Theory* suggests that humans are regularly exposed to external stimuli during waking hours, which are translated through mental exercises while sleeping. Some of these visuals then present through dreams, leading Freud to assert that dreams may contain latent information about the dreamer.

Freud’s analysis of dreams posits that these thought processes and images are logically related to the experiences of the individual, often in recent memory. Rather than a direct mirroring of the experiences, the brain processes the stimuli into two dream types, manifest dreams and latent dreams, each of which are attempting to fulfill a personal desire: manifest dreams directly and latent dreams indirectly. The brain translates these experiences through a process described by architectural historian John Shannon Hendrix thusly:

The coexistence of the mnemic [memory] image and the phonetic element in the writing of a dream is the coexistence of the Imaginary and Symbolic, and the coexistence of the mnemic residue of the visual perception and the mnemic residue of the auditory perception, the traces interwoven into the language of the unconscious [2].

Essentially, latent content experienced by the body and mind is collated through “double inscription” (Freud’s *Niederschrift*). controversial French psychiatrist Jacques Marie Émile Lacan, profoundly influenced by Freud’s theories, further presents this as a representation of a representation—the mnemic “residue” of the dream image later influencing the individual’s memory itself. Freud refers to dreams and their residues as “picture puzzles,”—nonsense when taken as individual literal pieces, but something that can be mined for additional information to form the form representation of meaning behind the thought process [3].

2.1 Projection as a Mental Process

According to Freud, the brain externalizes latent feelings, both “good” and “bad,” through mechanisms in response to this “dream-work” [4]. The mind may unconsciously “project” these latent feelings onto others as a form of external processing. Particularly where the brain is processing previous visual stimuli (either from dreaming or an individual’s general environment), projection may latently connect negative feeling with recognized imagery.

While Freud's interpretation of dreams has since been criticized, the theory of external information processing through projection has remained a consistent concept in psychoanalysis. Lacanian Projection presents the concept primarily as a defense mechanism, displacing parts of the individual into an external "mirror" image (the ego-centric "other"), through which the individual ideally sees himself [5]. Carl Jung's theory of projection further disassociates the projection from the projector, allowing the projection to be processed at a mental distance, also relieving the projector of some negative associations inherent in withholding it. Jung's definition of projection is broader and more externally observable than Freud's; he essentially describes a mental process by which we can misinterpret or misjudge another's intentions based on our own lack of context. While Freud considered these impressions reliant on a direct 1:1 translation, Jung's theory of projection suggests more comprehensive observable patterns in behavior that together create a projection on the subject. Together, these theories describe a perception through which an individual relates to, and interprets thoughts, feelings, and actions, based on their own experiences.

Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Hermann Rorschach brought projective theory into the visual world through the eponymous Rorschach Inkblot test, which attempted to understand the mind through visual associations. Compared with more traditional approaches to psychiatry, Rorschach's evolving visual approach was believed by some to be more accurate, particularly for diagnosing schizophrenia, depression, PTSD, and psychopathic personality. While assertions have been argued for and against, the concept of visual and/or artistic projections remains relevant in a contemporary context. Freud himself was somewhat dismissive of "the artist," at times, referring to him/her as "neurotic," but the social construct of art historiography and theory is inherently connected to projection [6]. More recently, projection through art production has been used as a form of art therapy, with psychologists connecting neuronal markers to the individual's perception of "self" and the process of drawing.

2.2 Projection as Spatial Agent

This more canonical comparison between visual practices and psychoanalysis is in the projection of the body's conscious *physicality* or organization of, and/or connection to, spatial volume, rather than the projection of self through the visualization. Philosopher and Phenomenologist Immanuel Kant addressed the built environment by supposing that beauty goes beyond mere aesthetic appreciation of the space, to be felt more deeply in the being as a pleasure of consciousness. According to Kant, Architectural beauty is not just found in the applied aesthetic, but in the projection of the space onto the senses of the viewer. Kant famously states "All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to the understanding, and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason" [7]. The contemporary concept of beauty at the time of Kant's writing involved preconceptions about building typologies and their inherent aesthetics, what Kant refers to as *a priori determinants*. A church may be beautiful, but the viewer knowing that it *is* a church results in a predetermined aesthetic projection. For Kant, the preconception is a way for the mind to organize sensory input into previously-known and understood categories. Theorists have translated Kant's ideas through the lens of building form and function. If there is a disconnect between our space and projected programmatic purpose, then our brains will not be able to categorize the sensory input as beautiful.

Similarly, philosopher Gaston Bachelard's idea of the unconsciousness housed, where our perception of ourselves is really our relationship of memory to time also aligns with the

Freud/Jung/Lacan theory of projection. Bachelard describes an understanding of volumetric space through agency; an action in which we see ‘self’:

At times we think we know ourselves in time, when all we know is a sequence of fixations in the spaces of the being’s stability...In its countless alveoli space contains compressed time. That is what space is for...The normal unconscious knows how to make itself at home everywhere, and psychoanalysis comes to the assistance of the ousted unconscious...we must also give an exterior destiny to the interior being...[8]

Bachelard’s “exterior destiny” gives a purpose, agency, or action to Lacan’s mirror self. Rather than the external projection remaining static, it may become an active reflection of the deepest interests and desires of an individual. While Bachelard’s theories are proposed for poetry, their inherent connection to spatial environment is clear in his discussion of phenomenological possibilities, writing:

Since it has been our intention to delve more deeply into the psychology of wonder from the phenomenological point of view, the least variation in a wonder-filled image ought to help refine our inquiry. The subtlety of an innovation revives the source, renews and redoubles the joy of wonder [9].

Though his primary medium is poetry, Bachelard’s philosophy in phenomenology as a method of studying and celebrating the mind’s innovation can be interpreted as a catalyst for creative thinking and imagination. Philosopher Michel Foucault also references Bachelard’s works as a description of the heterogeneous qualities of spatial relationships, with time as itself an agent of varying projection, suggesting “...space itself has a history in Western experience and it is not possible to disregard the fatal intersection of time with space” [10].

Hendrix also examines Lacan’s mirror theory and by extension Freud’s *Niederschrift* (double-inscription) through the complex visual communication of three-dimensional space, citing the “palimpsest” of relationships or architectural memories in San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane by Francesco Borromini. He goes on to specifically compare architect Peter Eisenman’s process work to that of Lacan, emphasizing the role that psychoanalysis might play in the formation of architectural concepts and space. Eisenman’s Deconstructionist comparison of language and building provide a precedent for how interdisciplinary systems and thought structures might be integrated into the design process.

Philosopher and architectural theorist Andrew Benjamin further translates Kant’s architectonic assertions in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* through the oft-translated passage “The undetermined object of an empirical intuition is entitled appearance.” Benjamin distinguishes between ‘matter’ and ‘form’ each in relation to appearance, which is the “undetermined.” In Benjamin’s translation of Kant, “Form does not pertain to sensation itself...Space is the ‘form of all appearances...’” [11]. Instead, Kant is describing an architectonic—relational principles or structures that achieve the transcendental aesthetic. The architectonic includes form, matter, time, all of the phenomenological forces at play for Bachelard and Foucault, which unite with our projected intuition or feeling to create a sensation in space.

Even Freud referenced Kant’s theory, suggesting that space is essentially a part of our psyche, extended into the physical space surrounding us: “Space may be the projection of the extension of the psychical apparatus. No other derivation is probable. Instead of Kant’s *a priori determinants* of our psychical apparatus. Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it” [12]. Freud’s theory proposes that our understanding of space is purely internal (a space of

the mind), not external, going beyond Kant's suggestion that space is an extension of the mind. In either case, the architectonic of relationships remains.

2.3 Projection vs. Perception

Philosopher and logician Alfred North Whitehead clarifies and expands Kant's architectonic theory of space, writing:

Space is not merely an ordering of material entities so that any one entity bears certain relations to other material entities. The occupation of space impresses a certain character on each material entity in itself. By reason of its occupation of space matter has extension. By reason of its extension each bit of matter is divisible into parts, and each part is a numerically distinct entity from every other such part. Accordingly it would seem that every material entity is not really one entity. It is an essential multiplicity of entities. There seems to be no stopping this dissociation of matter into multiplicities short of finding each ultimate entity occupying one individual point...[13]

As with Kant, if we present this argument as *physical* space with *humans* as occupier objects, the individual is relationally connected to her surroundings, while maintaining autonomy as a separate object. The individual's thoughts and feelings are one form of the relationship through which she engages with the space. This may occur through projection theory, where the individual unconsciously interprets the environment based on previous experiences, or through *perception*, a conscious interpretation of the external reality. Perception is used on external stimuli, compared to projection, which relies on one's own subconsciousness. Therefore, as designers, our environment influences us as much as we influence our environment.

3 Design Thinking, Architectural Ethics, and Empathy

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Freud's theories did not drive experimentation in spatial thinkers that they did in narrative and visual artists. His only real mention of "architecture" as a concept was to describe a structured organization to hysteria. Therefore, the previous applications of his psychologies/philosophies to the works of design are projections themselves. Yet, Freud and his contemporaries were valiantly seeking answers to the same questions that architects have asked for millennia—specifically, how do we understand the relationships of ourselves and our users to our build environment.

Architectural theorist John Abell collates many of the previous abstract philosophies to determine that "human experience is always influenced by the projection of the internal psyche outward onto relations with objects in the external world" [14]. Personal projection of the "user" may align with or expel the original projections of the designer, suggestion a relational architectural conversation over time. This is augmented by the social, cultural, and/or economic attributions projected as part of contemporary context.

3.1 Architectural Space as Relational

Freud's drawings of his early office and living environments as a student seem to augment this relational philosophy, with the individual projecting into the space around them, and subsequently being influenced by the space itself. Sigmund Freud's visual communication is primarily known through his diagrams of the mind and memory, as well as observational drawings of anatomy. These highlight Freud's use of a visual language to satisfy his

analytical proclivities and potentially work through scientific anomalies or challenges, such as with his eel experiment. In a few rare instances, however, Freud used architectural drawings with annotations to describe his working space. These can be used to reconstruct his thoughts on spatial organization as an extension of the subconscious.

The first of these spatial diagrams can be found embedded in a letter to Eduard Silberstein while Freud was working at the Institute Zoologisches Station in Trieste, Italy. Freud draws his small workroom in plan, including furniture and specimens, with annotations and a small diagrammatic section perspective his chair and his associated posture within it (Fig. 1). Alongside the drawings, Freud his “little room” as having an “odd floor plan,” a window, worktable, draws, tables, and shelves for books, three chairs, and a large door. While most of the description is a logical list, his mention of the floor plan as “odd” seems to relate to the cluttered use of the space, going on to describe that “when I am busy working there is not a spot left on which I can rest my hand.” The rest of the letter details his biological experiments, accompanied by drawings/diagrams that illustrate the specimens that he is discussing, suggesting that the spatial drawings are primarily to provide context to his full workplace set up for his friend to imagine. They remain, nevertheless, an artifact of Freud’s organizational and visual thinking and, as artist/architect Natalija Subotincic specifies, Freud’s described *relationship* to the objects—a projection of the mind into the physical space in 1876.

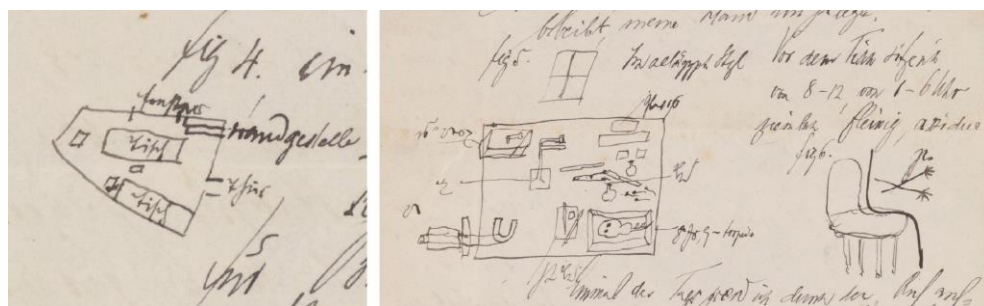


Fig. 1. Sigmund Freud’s sketches of his workspace at Institute Zoologisches Station, Trieste, Italy. Sigmund Freud. (1876) *Sigmund Freud Papers: General Correspondence, -1996; Silberstein, Eduard; Originals; Set A; 1876*. [Manuscript/Mixed Material] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999001173/>.

In later letters from his long-term workspace in Vienna General Hospital, Freud further details a projection of feeling into how he has arranged his office, as well as how he envisions his working and living space in the future. In a letter to his fiancée Martha Bernays in 1882, as he imagines a future with her, Freud writes, “Now it occurs to me that we would need two or three little rooms to live and eat in and to receive a guest, and a stove in which the fire for our meals never goes out...” [15]. In another letter to Bernays in 1883, Freud references Aristotle’s *threptikon* (vegetative soul) and *psyche* (sensitive/animalistic soul) in a whimsical drawing and annotating of his work and living space. Aristotle’s treatise *Περὶ Ψυχῆς* “*About the Soul*” (350 BCE) breaks down living beings into a hierarchy of soul types that arrange the beings by abilities of feeling, reason, and thought, and Freud uses this hierarchy to dividing his space between his “Animal” side and his “Vegetative” side, or his working vs. his living sides (Fig. 2). Subotincic suggests that this illustrates Freud’s own mental division

between work and living, particularly as Freud references that the animal side “fits me as well as a snail-shell fits the snail” [16].

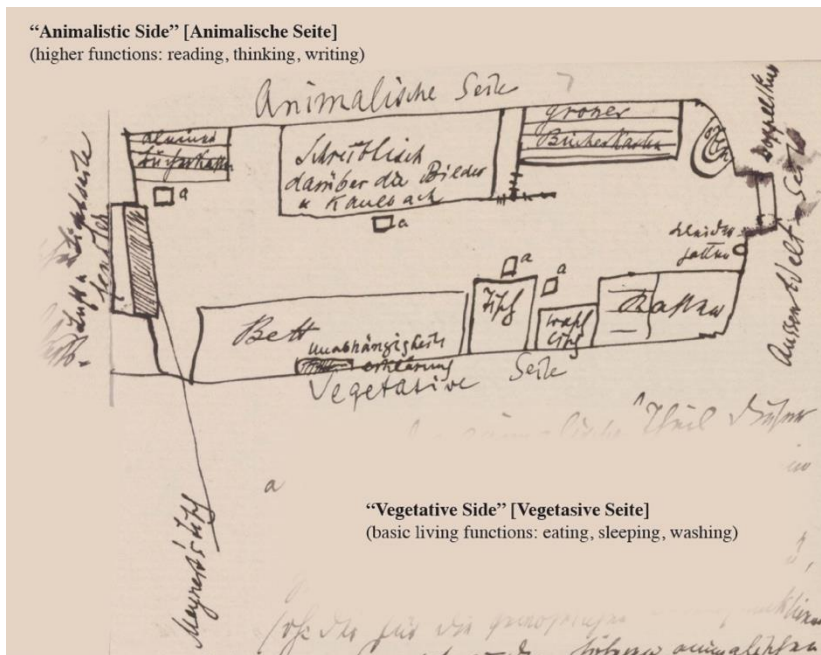


Fig. 2. Sigmund Freud's sketches of his workspace at Vienna General Hospital, 1883, with annotations by author. Sigmund Freud. (1883) Sigmund Freud Papers: Family Papers, -1978; Correspondence with Sigmund Freud, 1876 to 1974; Freud, Martha wife; "Brautbriefe"; Originals; 1883; Oct. 1-17. October 1, 1883. [Manuscript/Mixed Material] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999000082/>.

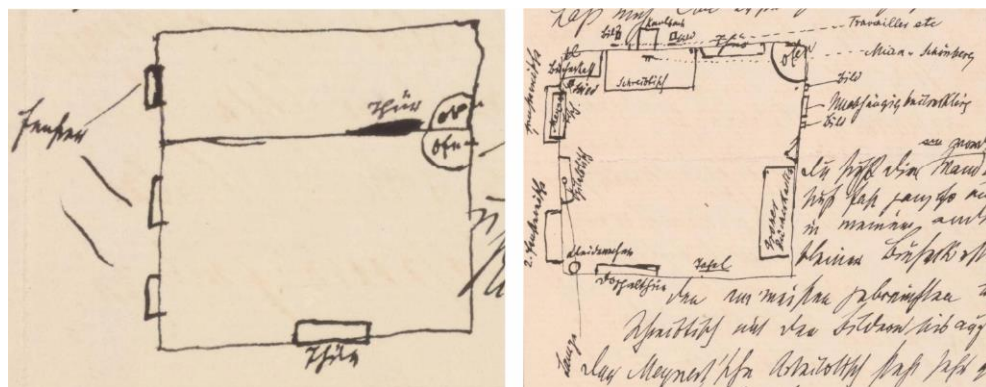


Fig. 3. Sigmund Freud's sketches of his later workspace at Vienna General Hospital, 1884. Sigmund Freud. (1884) Sigmund Freud Papers: Family Papers, -1978; Correspondence with Sigmund Freud, 1876 to 1974; Freud, Martha wife; "Brautbriefe"; Originals; 1884; Jan. 16-31. - January 31, 1884. [Manuscript/Mixed Material] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999000091/>.

In 1884, he once again visually details his new space for Bernays, which features two rooms, a bedroom and a workroom, both with windows (Fig. 3). Freud eventually moves his practice to Berggasse 19 in Vienna, where he produces some of his most famous works and iterates on his living and working environment several times. While he describes artifacts that he collects and displays in these rooms, there are no similar architectural drawings from this period, though interior architect Ro Spankie provides a reconstruction based on descriptions from patients and photographs of the rooms taken before the family fled Vienna in 1938 by Edmund Engelman. Spankie suggests the critical importance of the juxtaposition of the consulting room and the study of Berggasse 19 to Freud as “not simply a physical space, it is also a memory, a method, and a metaphor,” with the consulting room representing Freud’s “practice” space and study representing his “theory” space [17]. The position of his desk and chair with sight to the consulting couch suggests a mental conduit connecting theory and practice.

His adaptation and interpretation of his own architectural environment demonstrates a further ability to project his subconscious feelings into his spatial context, what Subotincic (2000) refers to as his own “current of unconscious thoughts”; a reference to Freud’s own words. While it does not appear that Freud ever saw the drawings of his spaces as anything other than context for his friends and contemporaries, together with his descriptions they give insight into his own maximalist tendencies, and the need for referential artifacts that solicit comfort (such as photographs of Bernays), reference, and ideas.

3.2 Design Thinking & Iteration

Social Anthropologist Tim Ingold describes humans as “the authors of their own designs, constructed through a self-conscious decision process – an intentional selection of ideas” when compared with other species [18]. According to Ingold, what separates human design/making from other animals is the creation of a tool vs. the *co-option* of the environment in the pursuit of complex problem solving. Animals may co-opt (for example, a crow using a twig to mine for insects in a tree), but humans can modify co-opted tools to better meet their needs. This anthropological development aligns with the cycle of design thinking. As humans have evolved to practice iteration in relationship to tools and survival, this has extended into the refinement of their everyday architectural environment. While somewhat community-oriented, these refinements may also be made with regard to personal preference, comfort, and need—projections from our mind into our space.

Design thinking can refer to a variety of processes, most of which can be characterized as human-centered approaches to problem solving. As a method of critical thinking, iteration involves a dialectic process of personal reasoning to form rational ideas, a psychological process that David Spendlove refers to as “inherently creative and design oriented” [19]. *Design/Designerly Thinking* can be used to describe this iterative process that questions context and norms and redefines problems to prototype, test, and refine solutions. Critically, the first step in the Design thinking process requires designers to empathize/understand the existing context or problem. While some may suggest that empathy removes the individual self from the center of the design process in favor of assess the needs of others, the concept of empathy begins with the individual’s ability to internalize those needs. Centering one’s self in the design process helps to mediate competing ideas and values of the design audience, particularly with regard to the ethics and morals inherent in the architectural design profession. When an iterative decision cannot rely purely on logic, the designer must make critical decisions on behalf of others in the design process.

In early/beginning architectural education, students are faced with these types of critical decisions as they form their own internal ideas, and later external projections of design. projection (both *a priori* and *a posteriori*) inherently connects the designer to implications of the space, necessitating conversation about ethical imperatives, colonial narratives, and/or intention in the function and aesthetics of space. Design thinking and empathy introduce prospective designers to the practice of seeking connection to others as an initiator of design. Therefore, the ability of a student to “project” inherently overlaps with the practice of empathy, teaching students about themselves as they learn to understand and serve others.

This presents questions for educators to consider in teaching design thinking as part of beginning design education: How might educators teach projection theory as a way for students to interpret and interact with the world around them in an informed way, contributing to the future built environment through empathy and iteration? Does our environment impact the design that we produce in a conscious or unconscious way? Do we project our own desires through design thinking, even while attempting empathetic design?

3.3 Cognitive & Emotional Empathy

Architects have a significant historical association with the concept of the Lone Genius as the sole individual in the design process, primarily based in the architectural history canon, or in pop culture depictions of designers such as Michelangelo in *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1965) and Howard Roark as headliner of Ayn Rand’s *The Fountainhead* (1943). In contrast, German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel offers a different view of the individual, from whom to draw understanding of the responsibility of the human as an integrated part of the Design Process. Hegel views the individual not as an isolated entity, but as one whose freedom and identity are realized through integration into varying communities and the philosophical and ethical awareness of others [20]. Essentially, the self-consciousness is a part of the individual but must be reconciled with the context of a universal society through rational thought and action. While the individual self-consciousness is critical in the design process, Hegel reminds us that it is the projection of the individual into the community, and the projection of the community back that really drives the formation of self-consciousness and gives meaning to a human iterative or decision-making process, essentially promoting empathetic relationships.

The definition of *empathy* within the Design thinking cycle can be translated in multiple ways. The linguistic root of the word is the Greek ἐμπάθεια (*empathia*), translated as “passion” or “affection”. This later became the German “*Einfühlung*” (“in-feeling” or “feeling into”) as part of the Romantic movement’s enhanced aesthetic response. Edward Titchener translated the German to the English “empathy” in 1909, but it was Theodor Lipps who evolved the concept to a philosophy of social understanding. The 19th century psychological root definition that empathy is an emotional, sympathetic response in the mind that prompts altruistic behavior remains the most popular public understanding. Contemporary psychology, however, bifurcates empathetic response into the 19th century-based Affective/Emotional Empathy, separating this from Cognitive Empathy, also referred to as Theory of the Mind. Cognitive Empathy does not involve an altruistic response and instead recognizes that others have thoughts and perspectives that may differ from the individual’s. These can be logically anticipated for the benefit of social interaction, the understanding of others’ needs, or even in making personal decisions [21]. Emotional Empathy and Cognitive Empathy are often conflated when teaching design thinking—particularly as each can have a role in the cycle.

To contextualize a more contemporary definition of empathy, revisiting pre-Romantic philosophy to the foundations of the Enlightenment, when discussions of the anthropological individual were peaking. As part of his own Enlightened writings, philosopher and historian David Hume asserted that:

...the minds of men are mirrors to one another not only because they reflect each others emotions, but also because those rays of passions, sentiments and opinions may be often reverberated, and may decay away by insensible degrees” [22]

The reverberation refers to the perceived feelings of others that have been prompted by the feelings of the sharer. Hume proposes that humans naturally reflect the feelings of others (like a mirror) as a form of sympathy. It is this feeling being imposed on and received by others in societal relations that is currently defined as “empathy.” This also reinforce Freud’s, Jung’s, and, particularly, Lacan’s theories of projection as a type of empathy.

3.4 Empathetic, Ethical, and/or Moral Projection?

Architectural ethics (and by extension the education regarding them) represent a codified system of principles, often based in community-informed morality. The American Institute of Architects Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct outlines general obligations of the architect and design process, as well as obligations to the public, clients, colleagues, the profession, and the environment. These expectations of professional service may or may not align with an individual’s moral code or ability to empathize as part of design thinking. Presumably, when an individual subscribes to a community, they subscribe to the ethics and morals inherent within, with their design becoming a reflection of those principles, further translated through the designer’s individual, adherent decisions. Codified ethics, however, remove a portion of the individual from the center of the design process, instead informing many of the decisions at the onset of the design. These generally prohibit the use of architecture to harm others. While many will philosophically agree that these are for the betterment of the community, they do present a potential competition of ideas related to the ethical and moral implications of architectural design, and the role of future designers in aligning with one stance or another.

Cognitive empathy, therefore, provides a projective method of implementing a Design thinking framework, and it still relies on the individual’s ability to process complex, logical assumptions about others and relate or act accordingly. Unlike affective/emotional empathy that may solicit or enhance an altruistic response to a moral dilemma, cognitive empathy promotes the outward expression/projection of inner logic, better aligning with codified ethics, and prompting an intellectual foundation for moral reasoning or design-making.

4 Our Architecture, Ourselves, For Others

Whether defined through the intricacies of Freud’s, Lacan’s, Jung’s, or others’ theories, the act of “projection” is inherent in the practice and education of architecture. Individuals are connected to the world around through projected biases or influences, understood through Hume & Lacan’s mirrors, Freud’s contextual sketches, Hendrix’s double-inscription as illustrated by Peter Eisenman, or a cognitive empathetic approach to the design process.

4.1 Mental Maps and Community Projection

Urban planner Kevin Lynch takes the prospect of projection as self-referential further, adding the additional layer of time to suggest that the palimpsestic relationship of memory and space described by Hendrix, Lacan’s mirror theory, and by extension Freud’s *Niederschrift*, can manifest as a type of community projection. He writes that the “concept of time must be consonant both with the structure of reality and with the structure of our minds and bodies,” drawing both from an understanding of psychological and aesthetic theories of how the mind understands time. Lynch presents space and time as symbiotic, and developed in childhood in relationship to each other, suggesting the eventual concept of “space-time” [23].

Lynch’s concept of mental mapping, outlined in his seminal book *The Image of the City* (1960), is a process through which an individual mentally spatializes memories through recognizable forms: *paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks* [24]. Though individuals develop their sense of these attributes early, their inclusion is consistent across communities. While each individual maps what is significant *individually* in mental mapping, the outcome is translatable by others through the five outlined attributes. Mental mapping provides a way to individual and personalize an experience that is shared by large populations (for example, traveling from point A to point B through a city) with each individual’s projection of experience over the existing urban fabric. Freud’s own maps of central Europe (1882) (Fig. 4) and Paris (1885) (Fig. 5) demonstrate these qualities, highlighting same types of recognizable forms that he found significant to visually describe to his wife, Martha.

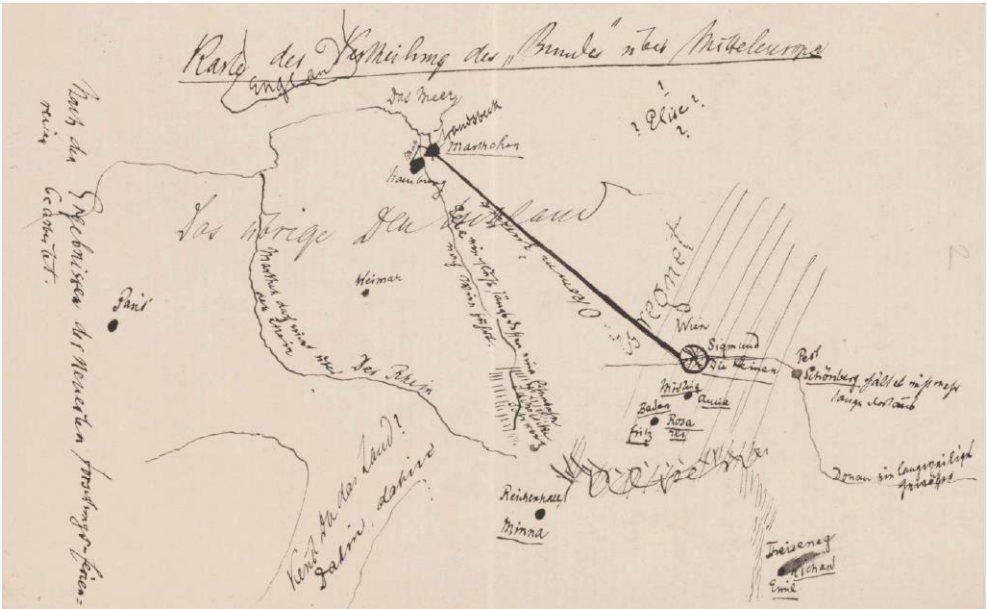


Fig. 4. Freud “mental map” of central Europe and his familial connections, 1882. Sigmund Freud. (1882) Sigmund Freud Papers: Family Papers, -1978; Correspondence with Sigmund Freud, 1876 to 1974; Freud, Martha wife; “Brautbriefe”; Originals; 1882; July 14-31. - July 31, 1882. [Manuscript/Mixed Material] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss3999000060/>.

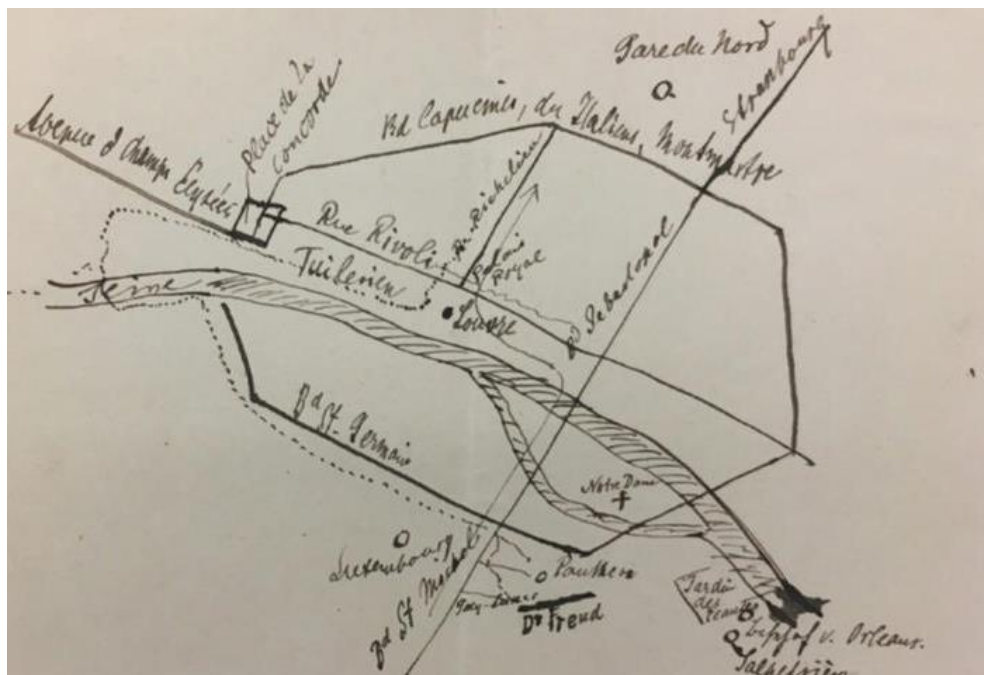


Fig. 5. Freud “mental map” of Paris, 1885. Sigmund Freud. (1885) Sigmund Freud Papers: Family Papers, -1978; Correspondence with Sigmund Freud, 1876 to 1974; Freud, Martha wife; “Brautbriefe”: Originals; 1885.

4.2 Familial Projection

Though it would be a theoretical leap to suggest that Freud had a significant interest in architecture, his practice of psychoanalysis has had a critical impact on architectural theory in the last 100 years, in part as a result of his son Ernst Freud's architectural work. Ernst, fourth child of Sigmund and wife Martha, did not gain the same fame that his father had, but became a respected domestic architect and interior designer in Berlin and then London after his study at Technische Hochschule and Adolph Loos's Bauschule in Vienna. Ernst's architectural practice aligned primarily with the prevailing influences of the 1920s and 1930s, seeking to modernize the aesthetic of the bourgeois family home, without the political and social implications of his contemporaries such as Erick Mendelsohn and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

Following his move to London amidst the rise of Nazism in Berlin Ernst was commissioned by several of Sigmund's psychoanalyst colleagues to design or renovate both private residences and/or their consulting rooms. For the consulting rooms in particular, there is a clear connection to his father's intentional arrangement of the patient couch and doctor chair, with Ernst essentializing the practice of the connection between the two, but eventually removing the wall along which the patient couch had rested in Sigmund's practice. As no description from Ernst remains as to why this edit was made, any theories remain conjectural, but the change could be derived from Ernst's own architectural instinct projection into the practice of psychoanalysis.

Ernst's designs for consulting rooms also differed from Sigmund's in their stark aesthetic, in contrast to Sigmund's collection of artifacts, art, and general decorative

elements. Ernst's aesthetic (or that of his clients) was more in line with Loos and Mies van der Rohe's minimalist ornamentation, leading psychoanalyst Pryn's Hopkins to observe that the consulting space of fellow psychoanalyst Ernest Jones differed significantly from Jones' mentor Sigmund, "nearly bare of furniture and gloomy" [25]. Whether this divergence of architectural style was an intentional reaction to his father or a modernist approach to essentialism could be debated. In either case, Ernst's work in designing consulting rooms specifically for the practice of psychoanalysis was in itself revolutionary for the time.

It is difficult to assume that Ernst's childhood with Sigmund and his intentional arrangement of his spaces, connection between home and work life, and other idiosyncrasies did not have an impact on Ernst's later designs of consulting rooms, or the fact that he accepted these types of commissions entirely. Sigmund's work likely inspired Ernst with at least an elevated understanding of the necessities of a psychoanalyst's requirements, as well as the philosophies of feeling comfortable in a home. Consciously or subconsciously, Sigmund projected his influence through the work of Ernst, who engrained it in his own practice as an individual iterative agent. His architecture remains his own, but the influences on him cannot be ignored.

In order to truly understand how to empathize with the needs of others, we have to understand our own position in the profession, its morals, and its ethics. Freud et. al.'s projection theory provides a mechanism through which we can begin to understand how our latent proclivities may impact our impression of others' needs.

4.3 Our Architecture, Ourselves, for Others

While this paper is highly theoretical, it seeks to understand the collocation of psychoanalytic inward and outward projection as part of the design process. Architecture requires substantial investment in education to understand and address the needs of others in the design process. Much of this education is conscious and focused, but the practice maintains space for individuality to be exposed through the Design thinking process. While the historical predilection of the architect as Lone Genius has fallen out of fashion in favour of community-engaged team-driven design practice, the outward expression of the internal subconscious of an individual may still appear in some decision-making, driven by internal desires, mnemonic residue, or time. Therefore, we design for others, but also ourselves, a double-inscription or mirror of our desires, projected into the environment around us.

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