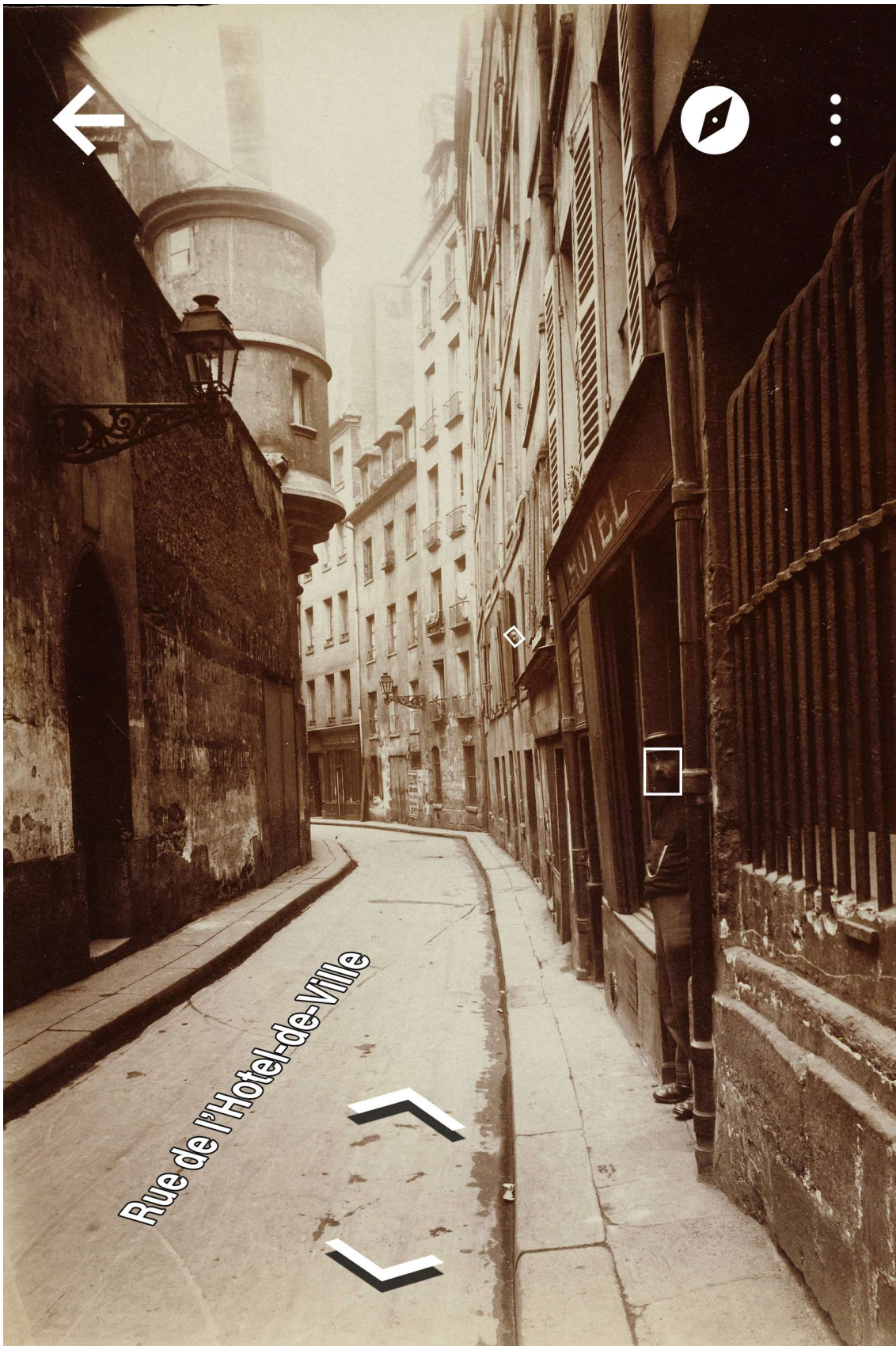


Lupini Bean, Big Data Little People, *After Eugène Atget* (2021)



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In late 1890s, Eugène Atget started photographing the empty streets of Paris. He worked in early mornings so that the streets were cleared out from its people. His photography documented the architecture and the street scenes of Paris. In fact, his collection was the largest documentation of pre-World War Paris, after which the architectural essence of Paris was changed.

[Enter Google Maps]

What is Atget's personal ambition next to Google Maps? Is there a meaning beyond aesthetics in doing what Atget did today? Is a street ever empty or undocumented in the age of big data?

Fundamentals of humanity have changed in the last century. See, Atget did not have a right to privacy, unlike me. We don't know in which institution he received his education as a pupil. The name of my school is accessible to anyone who knows my name. I have a right to privacy, but Atget had privacy.

Atget lived in a city named Paris. I live in a database. He engaged with the city that surrounded him, he observed and documented his surroundings. I am observed and documented by my surroundings.